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THEOLOGY OF THE SACRAMENTS

A STUDY IN POSITIVE THEOLOGY

BY THE

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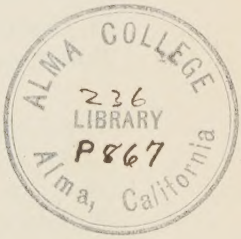

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Liberal Protestantism triumphantly affirms, in the name of history, that the Catholic dogmas concerning the Sacraments are purely human doctrines, and even that these Christian rites were borrowed from Paganism. Other errors have also been put forth of late in regard to the relation of history to sacramentary theology.

Called upon by his functions to submit those biased and exaggerated doctrines to a critical examination, the author has carefully studied the facts with the aid of a rigorously scientific method. The result of this impartial examination has been to show that an exclusively Christian inspiration presided over the origin of our dogmas regarding the Sacraments and over the origin of those Sacraments themselves, and that between the scriptural and patristic data in this matter and the sacramentary definitions of the Council of Trent, there exists a conformity sufficient to satisfy any reasonable mind.

Very competent persons, whose authority has special weight with the writer, thought that this work which had been useful to many, might be useful to others too. For this reason is the present volume published.

*
* *

This study of positive sacramentary theology is based on the traditional conception of the development

of dogma, that which St. Vincent of Lerins outlined in the fifth century, which Newman has set forth so powerfully in modern times, and which the Vatican Council has made its own: "Sacrorum . . . dogmatum is sensus perpetuo est retinendus, quem semel declaravit Sancta Mater Ecclesia, nec unquam ab eo sensu, altioris intelligentiæ specie et nomine, recedendum. Crescat igitur et multum vehementerque proficiat, tam unius hominis, quam totius Ecclesiæ, ætatum et sæculorum gradibus, intelligentia, scientia, sapientia: sed in suo duntaxat genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque sententia." [1]

This doctrine of the development of dogma finds indeed in sacramentary theology a particularly striking application. For the historical development of the Catholic dogma coincides fairly well with its logical development.

It was the Trinitarian doctrines which first and almost exclusively absorbed the thoughts of ecclesiastical writers of the first four centuries. Then in the fifth and sixth centuries, the Nestorian, Pelagian and Monophysite heresies obliged the Church to fix the attention upon the Christological dogma, and upon those concerning original sin and grace. Only afterwards did Christian thought turn to the formal consideration of those means of grace and of remission of sin which are the Sacraments.

Therefore, while the development of the Trinitarian, Christological and Soteriological dogmas was almost entirely completed during the patristic period, that of the sacramentary dogmas went on more slowly. It

[1] *Constitutio de fide catholica,* cap. 4, *De fide et ratione,* Cf. can. 3, *De fidè et ratione.* DENZINGER, *Enchiridion symbolorum et definitionum,* nos. 1647, 1665. (New edition, nos. 1800, 1818).

was worked out in the Middle Ages, by the Scholastic theologians who are the representatives of Catholic tradition in their time, as the Fathers are in the first centuries.

But although the development of the dogmas of the Sacraments was rather late, the Sacraments themselves have, from the very beginning, been used by the Church which received them from Jesus Christ. "The rites which possess the power of producing grace have always been practised in the Church. To each ceremony was joined a traditional doctrine which explained its nature and effects. . . . But the systematic and philosophic form (of the doctrine) did evolve." This quotation from the Abbé de Broglie [2] expresses well the manner in which the dogmas of the Sacraments developed; they are for the most part theoretical expressions of the practice of the Church with regard to the Sacraments. The well-known saying "*Lex orandi, lex credendi*" finds here its full justification.

The reader then will not be tempted to conclude from the rather late formation of the theology of the Sacraments to the late appearance of the Sacraments themselves. Such an inference would be absolutely wrong.

* * *

Some brief remarks on the Latin theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who developed the theology of the Sacraments, will not perhaps be out of place here.

During the twelfth century, three schools particu-

[2] De Broglie, *Conférences sur la vie surnaturelle*, t. iii, *Les Sacrements*, pp. 306–307.

larly contributed to the formation of the theology of the Sacraments as well as to the formation of Scholastic theology properly so called: the school of Abelard, the school of St. Victor and that of Peter Lombard.

The recent works of Fr. Denifle [3] and Fr. Gietl [3a] have shown the existence of an Abelardian school which exercised a great influence upon most of the writers of the age. In spite of the numerous errors which he taught, and the condemnations which he received, Abelard had shown his disciples the good use which they could make of dialectics in theology. He had also formulated some pregnant principles on the Sacraments, which served in no small degree to direct subsequent writers. Fr. Gietl, in his edition of the *Sentences* of Roland Bandinelli, who was afterwards Pope Alexander III, has shown how greatly indebted the latter was to the school of Abelard.

Even the school of St. Victor, whose mystical tendencies differ so much from those of the school of Abelard, did not escape entirely from its influence. If the work which Fr. Gietl did for the *Sentences* of Roland were done for the treatise *De Sacramentis Christianæ Fidei* of Hugh,[4] this would be evident. Besides, the *Summa Sententiarum*,[5] attributed for a long time and falsely to Hugh of St. Victor, is equally indebted to Abelard.[6] Still, while drawing inspiration

[3] *Abælard's Sentenzen und die Bearbeitung seiner Theologia*, in *Archiv für Literatur und Kirchengeschichte Mittelalters*, Freiburg in B., 1885, t. i., pp. 402 sq., 584 sq., 584 sq.

[3a] *Die Sentenzen Rolands nachmals Papstes Alexander III*, Freiburg in B., 1891, Einleitung, pp. 21–34.

[4] MIGNE, *P.L.*, clxxvi, 174–618.

[5] MIGNE, *P.L.*, clxxvi, 42–174.

[6] Cf. PORTALIÉ, *Dictionnaire de Théologie catholique, art.* "Abélard," i, 53–54.

from Abelardian sources, the school of St. Victor brought to the theology of the Sacraments important personal contributions. Thus it prepared the way for the work of the Master of the Sentences.

In composing his fourth book of the *Sentences,*[7] Peter Lombard utilized the data of the Abelardian school, enriched by the precise statements and developments of the school of St. Victor. As we shall remark frequently in this volume, his chief merit consisted in synthesizing the whole doctrine of the Sacraments, expounded by his predecessors, into one harmonious whole and confirming it by texts from the Fathers. The work of the Master of the Sentences was particularly fruitful; and from it dates sacramentary theology properly so-called. The development of the doctrine of the Sacraments was completed in the thirteenth century by the great Scholastic theologians of the order of St. Francis and of St. Dominic. Peter of Poitiers (†1205), William of Auxerre (†1223), and some other writers of the beginning of the thirteenth century contributed, by their works, to this theological progress. But their share in the work appears insignificant, when compared to that of the Franciscans, Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure and Duns Scotus, and that of the Dominicans, Albert the Great and St. Thomas.

*
* *

The method employed in this study of the theology of the Sacraments need not be explained nor justified, for it has been in vogue since the seventeenth century.[8]

[7] *P. L.*, cxcii, 839–943.

[8] Cf. *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique,* June, 1906, pp. 169–170.

Certain particular features, however, make some explanation necessary.

Contrary perhaps to the historical method, the statement of the Catholic doctrine, defined by the Council of Trent, is placed at the beginning of each question, instead of occupying the place which belongs to it chronologically. Desire for clearness has rendered this process necessary. Experience proves that when one takes up a complete history of dogma without recalling in the beginning the definition of the Church, minds are easily misled. Moreover, it was indispensable, in the beginning of each chapter, to differentiate clearly the Catholic doctrine which is imposed *de fide*, from mere opinions of theologians. This can be accomplished only by explaining, at the very beginning, the decrees of the Council of Trent. Nor has this method in any way prejudiced the claims of the most rigorous critical spirit, which has presided over this historical treatise of sacramentary theology.

There will be found in the course of the volume mention of the works which have been consulted.[9]

[9] P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den heiligen Sacramenten der katholischen Kirche*, Freiburg im B., 1893.

Oswald, *Die dogmatische Lehre von den heiligen Sacramenten der katholischen Kirche*, vierte Aufl., Münster, 1877.

Probst, *Sacramente und Sacramentalien in den ersten drei Iahrhunderten*, Tübingen, 1872.

Hahn, *Die Lehre von den Sacramenten*, 1864.

Gröne, *Sacramentum oder Begriff und Bedeutung vom Sacrament in der alten Kirche bis zur Scholastik*, Brilon, 1853.

Schätzler, *Die Lehre von der Wirksamkeit der Sacramente ex opere operato in ihrer Entwicklung innerhalb der Scholastik und ihrer Bedeutung für die christliche Heilslehre*, München 1860.

Bach, *Die Siebenzahl der Sacramente*, Regensburg, 1864.

Haas, *Die nothwendige Intention des Ministers*, Bamberg, 1869.

Useful as they were to us, we have never felt that these works dispensed us from the study of the texts themselves.[10] Besides, the field of positive theology of the Sacraments has been as yet but little explored. Often we have been obliged to traverse it without a guide.

We have employed in the course of this work the expression, "the Church became conscious of her dogma." Conscious, is here a synonym for "explicitly cognizant." When the Church, that is the pastors and the faithful, acquires an explicit knowledge of dogma, she may be said to become conscious of it, since for her, the dogma then passes from the implicit to the explicit stage. This terminology is convenient and implies no innovation.

Some may think perhaps that the time was not yet come to make an historical synthesis of the theology of the Sacraments, since the history of the Sacraments is not fully completed. But to wait until the science is fully developed before attempting a scientific synthesis, would be to wait indefinitely. The needs of the human mind are such as to call from time to time for a synthesis of results, even at the cost of later modification. Now the history of the Sacraments has been sufficiently studied, from the seventeenth century to our day, to justify an attempt at synthesizing; all the more that here, contrary to what obtains in other sciences, we have the infallible definitions of the Church, which forever remain as so many acquired results for theological science. We do not pretend,

[10] Unless otherwise stated, the writers anterior to the thirteenth century are cited from the *Patrology* of Migne. Denzinger's *new* edition referred to is the tenth edition, 1908.

therefore, to have accomplished a definitive work — far from it. We have simply wished to be of service to our readers. Heaven grant that this desire may be realised!

Lyons, June, 1906.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

This third edition has been brought up to date, profiting by the latest studies that have been published on the Sacraments. In conformity to a desire that has been expressed, a general synthesis of the development of the sacramental doctrines has been added at the end of the volume, permitting the reader to seize at one glance the principal features of this development. The analytical method has been adopted in the work. This method separates the different questions of sacramentary theology, and has doubtless the disadvantage of failing to show this general development, and of exposing us to repetition. But it has in its favor that it agrees with the plan of the treatise on the *Sacraments in general;* it also allows of a more detailed and complete exposition of this complex history than would a synthetic study.

Since the publication of the first two editions of this work, there has appeared the decree of the Holy Office *Lamentabili sane exitu.* Propositions xxxix-li concern the sacramentary doctrines. They condemn the evolutionary and naturalistic theories which have been put forth of late on the origin of the Sacraments. According to these theories, Jesus, either because of a belief in the proximity of the eschatological Kingdom, or because of different reasons, had no intention of instituting either Church or Sacraments. The Church was established without the foreknowledge

and the intention of the Savior. The Sacraments came into being because of the need, found in every religion, of expressing itself in external worship:— the need created its organ. The Apostles and their successors "under the inspiration and the force of circumstances and events" instituted the Sacraments, and attached them arbitrarily to some thought or word of Jesus, thus giving to the Savior intentions which He never really had.[11]

Such theories, diametrically opposed to the definitions of the Council of Trent, as well as to the results of sound criticism, have — needless to say — nothing in common with this attempt at explaining the origin of the Sacraments. May this essay recall to minds, troubled by the present religious crisis, that it is possible, without exceeding the bounds of orthodoxy, to give appropriate solution to the new problems which have arisen.

[11] *Prop. XL:* Sacramenta ortum habuerunt *ex eo quod* Apostoli eorumque successores ideam aliquam et intentionem Christi, suadentibus et moventibus circumstantiis et eventibus, interpretati sunt.

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CHAPTER I

A SACRAMENT DEFINED

A sacrament is defined as an efficacious symbol of grace. The notion of an efficacious symbol was worked out by the ecclesiastical writers of the third and fourth centuries, in connection with Baptism and the Eucharist. The first to attempt a technical definition of a sacrament was St. Augustine; but his formula contains only the generic term of the definition: "A sacrament is a sign of grace." It was for the theologians of the twelfth century to complete the Augustinian formula by adding the specific idea: A sacrament is an *efficacious* sign of grace. Since the Council of Trent, theologians have but set forth with more detail the formula of the mediæval writers.

There appear, then, in the progressive development of the definition of sacrament, four distinct stages: the pre-Augustinian elaboration of the concept of efficacious symbolism; the Augustinian definition; the formula of the twelfth century writers; and, finally, that of theologians since the Council of Trent.

§ I. *Elaboration of the Concept of Efficacious Symbolism with regard to Baptism and the Eucharist, by writers prior to St. Augustine.*

The faith of the Church in the production of an invisible spiritual effect through Christian rites, could not but lead to the notion of an efficacious symbol. It was altogether natural that the faithful should come

to look upon the ceremony as symbolical of the effects which it produces, and this idea is to be met with even in the Apostolic writings. St. Paul applies it to Baptism, and, in some sense, to the Eucharist and to Matrimony. It is our purpose to study its history first in the Greek, and then in the Latin literature.

* * *

"Know you not," says St. Paul to the Romans,[1] "that all we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His death?" The waters of Baptism into which the new converts, baptized then by immersion, were plunged totally to wash them of their sins, symbolize the death of Christ and the sepulchre wherein He was entombed. The neophyte emerging from the baptismal bath, whence he has received a new life which he ought never to lose, represents Christ coming forth from the tomb, living also a new life and henceforth immortal.[2] The baptismal immersion, therefore, typifies death to sin, the death of the old man buried in the waters, as Christ in the tomb; the emersion is the birth of the new and regenerated man. The baptismal ceremony is then a symbol of Christ's death and resurrection, and as well, of the death to sin and of the supernatural regeneration of the Christian soul.

Again, in the Eucharist St. Paul discerns a symbolism from which the Fathers are to derive a great deal of inspiration. The Eucharistic bread, which is the body of the Lord,[3] is also the symbol of the unity

[1] vi, 13.

[2] *Rom.* vi, 4–11.

[3] "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgement unto himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord."—*I Cor.* x, 29.

of the Church, the mystical body of Christ. "For we being many are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread." [4] The Eucharist then is symbolical of the union which it effects among the faithful.

This Pauline conception of the Church as the mystical body of Christ, serves also as a foundation of the symbolism of Christian marriage set forth in the Epistle to the Ephesians.[5] In matrimony Christ is represented by the husband, "the head of the woman," and the Church, by the woman who is, so to speak, the husband's body. "Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things." On the other hand, the husbands "ought to love their wives as their own bodies," even as "Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it." This intimate union of the espoused, likened also to the union of the body with its head, is founded on the words of Genesis: *"Erunt duo in carne una."* But these words, when applied to Christ and His Church, have for St. Paul a deeper and more mysterious significance: Τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν. The text of Genesis is but half understood, unless marriage, which makes of man and wife one flesh, be considered as typifying the inviolable union between Christ and His Church.

These first outlines of sacramental symbolism will be the starting point of all later theories. St. Ignatius of Antioch, when making allusion to the Eucharist, is not content with an affirmation of the real presence,[6] but to be more explicit, takes up and de-

[4] *I Cor.* x. 17. Cf. P. Batiffol, *Etudes d'Histoire et de Théologie positive, L'Eucharistie,* Paris, 1905, pp. 13 ss.

[5] v, 22–23.

[6] *Smyr.* vii, 1. The Docetæ "abstain from the Eucharist and

velops the symbolism outlined by St. Paul. The heretics whom he combats are dangerous, not merely because of their errors, but as well by reason of the divisions and schisms which they cause in the Churches of Asia; hence St. Ignatius urges the faithful to remain in union with their bishops. The Eucharist is proposed to them as the type and motive of that union which ought to exist between Christians and their pastors. "Those who belong to God and to Jesus Christ, the same are they who are with the bishop. Be not deceived, brethren, the schismatics will have no place in the Kingdom of God. See to it then that you receive the one only Eucharist, for there is but one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one chalice in the unity of His blood, one altar, even as He has but one episcopate, one priesthood and one deaconship." [7]

The Didache,[8] though it does not betray the same preoccupations as the Ignatian Epistles, contains the same idea, though much less accentuated.

Sacramental symbolism then in its rudimentary stage dates back at least from the very beginning of the Church. Its appearance at so early a period explains, in great part, the use of the word "*μυστήριον*" which served very soon to designate Christian rites.[9]

from prayer because they would not acknowledge that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and was raised to life by the Father in His goodness." Cf. TIXERONT, *La Théologie anténicéenne*, Paris, 1905, p. 143.

[7] *Philad.* iii, 2-4. Cf. *Ephes.* xx, 2. The Eucharistic symbolism of St. Ignatius has been exhaustively studied by P. BATIFFOL, *op. cit.*, pp. 122 ss.

[8] ix.

[9] ST. JUSTIN, *I Apol.*, 29. ORIGEN, *Contra Cels.*, iii; *P.G.*, xi, 999.

The sacramental theories properly so called did not appear, however, until the third century, with Clement and with Origen particularly, at Alexandria. The Alexandrian atmosphere was admirably suited to the production of them. Neo-Platonic philosophy, which made so much of symbolism, had habituated its devotees to seek, under the literal sense of a writing or beneath the external appearance of an object, deeper and more mysterious realities. To them the phenomenal world is but a sign or indication of an intelligible world concealed within.[10] Thus they attached so much importance to the study of mere symbols whence Scriptural allegorism in particular derives its principles.

" A sign," says Origen, " is a visible something that suggests the idea of another invisible thing " (signum dicitur cum per hoc quod videtur aliud aliquid indicatur). Jonas coming forth from the whale's belly is a sign of the resurrection of Christ. Circumcision commanded by God to Abraham, typifies the spiritual circumcision of the heart of which St. Paul speaks, *Philip.* iii, 3.[11] A sign (*σημεῖον*) is distinguished from a prodigy, *τέρας*: a prodigy is an extraordinary doing, intended to excite the admiration of

The word *μυστήριον* signified, among the Greeks, both a secret doctrine and a symbolical religious ceremony which only the initiated were permitted to know and understand. Naturally then the Christian truths revealed by God to the world, and Christian ceremonies came to be called *μυστήρια*. Since the fourth century the word *μυστήριον* has become the usual expression for designating the Sacraments. The Greek terminology was introduced into the West chiefly by St. Ambrose in his treatise *De Mysteriis*. Even to this day, we speak of the Eucharist as the Holy Mysteries.

[10] Cf. ZELLER, *Philosophie der Griechen,* vol. iii[b], p. 251.

[11] *In Epist. ad Rom.,* iv, 2; *P.G.,* xiv, 968.

men, while the sign is but commonplace and merely turns our thoughts to something other than itself.[12] The waters of Baptism recall the death to sin which they typify: they are, as St. Paul says, the grave in which we die and are buried with Christ.[13] So too the baptismal bath symbolizes the complete purification of the soul now cleansed from all its stains. But it is not merely a symbol; it is also, thanks to the all-powerful invocation of the adorable Trinity, to him who gives himself to God the beginning and source of the divine gifts.[14]

The application, however, of symbolism to the Eucharist as made by Origen was less happy, for it was found to be incompatible with traditional realism.[15] The Eucharist is not, as Baptism, simply an efficacious symbol of a spiritual effect: it is a symbol containing the reality which it symbolizes, namely, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Now such a conception of Eucharistic symbolism could make its appearance, only when the doctrine of the conversion of the bread and the wine should have been developed. In the meantime writers will be tempted to apply sym-

[12] *In Joan.*, xiii, 60; *P.G.*, xiv, 521.

[13] *In Epist. ad Rom.*, v, 8; *Ibid.*, 1037.

[14] *In Joan.*, vi, 17, Τὸ διὰ τοῦ ὕδατος λουτρὸν, σύμβολον τυγχάνον καθαρσίου ψυχῆς, πάντα ῥύπον ἀπὸ κακίας ἀποπλυνομένης... *P.G.*, xiv, 257.

[15] The Eucharistic faith of the Church has always been belief in the real presence. Yet there was a time when no scientific expression of this belief existed; this could come about only gradually. The crudeness of these early speculations is sufficiently explained by the very difficulties of the subject. Cf. Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, p. 181, ff. Tixeront, pp. 275, 301. (See also Pourrat, The Teaching of the Fathers on the Real Presence.)

bolism to the Eucharist in about the same way as to Baptism.

As we have seen, it is from the invocation of the adorable Trinity that Origen would derive the whole efficacy of Baptism. Likewise it is from the prayer said over the bread, that is to say, from the words of the institution and of the epiclesis, that the Eucharist has the sanctifying effect which it produces in him who communicates with proper dispositions.[16] As to the Eucharistic bread, "that sanctified food," it is, as the baptismal ablution, a symbol indeed, but a symbol the meaning of which is as yet undetermined. At times it is symbolical of the teaching of Christ, the teaching which nourishes souls and makes glad our hearts,[17] and again it is the "typical and symbolical body of Christ."[18] The Eucharistic bread is no more a pure symbol than is the baptismal ablution, since, like it, its effect is sanctification. Thus we see that Origen is not a symbolist merely. Yet he does not affirm that this symbol contains the body of Christ; the truth is that he did not grasp the difference that exists between the symbolism of Baptism and that of the Eucharist.

Indeed, his disciples also failed in this at first. Eusebius of Cæsarea and several others speak frequently of the Eucharistic bread and wine in such ambiguous

[16] *In Matt.*, xi, 14. *P.G.*, xiii, 949.

[17] *In Matt. Commentariorum series*, 85, *P.G.*, xiii, 1734, 1735. This idea had already been set forth by Clement (*Pæd.* I, vi), from whom Origen borrowed it.

[18] Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν (i.e., that which has been said of the sanctified bread) περὶ τοῦ τυπικοῦ καὶ συμβολικοῦ σώματος.— *In Matt.*, xi, 14, *P.G.*, xiii, 952.

terms as types and symbols of Christ's body and blood.[19]

However a reaction in the name of traditional realism set in against this Eucharistic symbolism of Origen. The Cappadocians are distrustful of it, and St. Basil is even careful, when speaking of the Eucharist, to avoid every symbolistic formula. As for the Antiochians, they are altogether opposed to it. Theodore of Mopsuestia protests against all Eucharistic symbolism whatsoever: "Christ did not say, 'This is a symbol of My Body, and this is a symbol of My Blood,' but He did say, 'This is My Body and this is My Blood.' He teaches us to abstract from the nature of the oblation, and to consider only that these gifts are transformed into His flesh and blood by the Eucharistic prayer."[20] St. John Chrysostom goes even so far in the same direction as almost to fall into ultra-realism.[21]

The truth, as always, is in the golden mean. Symbolism has its place in the Eucharist, otherwise there would be no sacrament. The doctrine of transubstantiation which by the fourth century was sufficiently developed, enabled St. Cyril of Jerusalem to reconcile that symbolism with the traditional realism. The bread and the wine are changed — μεταβέβληται[22]

[19] Eusebius, *Demonstr. Evangel.*, i, 10, *P.G.*, xxii, 89.

[20] *In Matt.*, xxvi, 26; *P.G.*, lxvi, 713.

[21] *In Joan.*, hom. xlvi, 3. In the Eucharist Christ is not only "seen," He is handled (ἅψασθαι); the Christian fastens his teeth into His flesh (ἐμπῆξαι τοὺς ὀδόντας τῇ σαρκὶ), expressions which are true only of the Eucharistic species. Conscious of the need of speaking with more accuracy, the Holy Doctor says, elsewhere, that Christ's Body cannot be perceived by our senses, only by our faith. *In Matt.*, lxxxii, 4.

[22] *Cat. Mystag.*, iv, 7.

into the Body and Blood of Christ; "The bread which is present to the senses is not bread; . . . the wine which is seemingly present is not wine," for "in the figure of bread — ἐν τύπῳ ἄρτου — there is given His Body, and in the figure of wine, His Blood." [23] The appearances of bread (ὁ φαινόμενος ἄρτος) and of wine (ὁ φαινόμενος οἶνος) are figures (τύποι), symbols, containing the Body and Blood of Christ.

Thus after a few vicissitudes the application of symbolism to the Eucharist attained, in Greek literature, to an accurate and almost set expression. St. John Damascene, though two centuries later, is content merely to reproduce the teaching of St. Cyril and of the Greek writers of the fourth century.[24]

Baptismal symbolism experienced no such vicissitudes; it was accepted just as Origen had stated it, after St. Paul, and interpreted during the fourth century according to the then current notion of the efficacy of Baptism. Origen, as we have seen, ascribed this efficacy to the invocation of the adorable Trinity. Subsequent writers, influenced by the text of St. John, "Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu," were led, in the controversies about the divinity of the Holy Ghost, to account for the efficacy of the baptismal rite by the presence of the Holy Ghost in the water. "If the baptismal water has in it any virtue," says St. Basil,[25] "it has it not of itself, but by reason of

[23] *Mystag.*, iv, 3, 9.

[24] *De Fide orthodoxa*, iv, 13; *P.G.*, xciv, 1141–1144.

[25] *De Spiritu Sancto*, 35; *P.G.*, xxxii, 128 sq. The formula for the blessing of baptismal water in Serapion's *Euchologium* asks of God "to fill the waters with the Holy Ghost," to bring down upon them the Word "that they may receive from Him their virtues." G. Wobbermin, *Altchristliche liturgische Stücke* (Leip-

the presence of the Holy Spirit, ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος παρουσίας.

Supernatural regeneration implies that the previous life of sin is annihilated, and that a new life begins. Hence Baptism has a twofold aim: to make us die to sin, and live for God. Death to sin takes place in the waters of Baptism, wherein the catechumen is buried as in a grave; the new life is imparted by the Holy Ghost.[26] Baptismal immersion, then, is truly for St. Basil the symbol of death to sin, a symbol which receives from the Holy Spirit all its efficacy.

In order to throw light on this action of the Holy Spirit in baptismal regeneration, St. Gregory Nazianzen insists on the conformity of Baptism with man's nature. Man is made up of two elements, an invisible soul and a visible body. This is why there are in Baptism two purifications, the one made by water, and the other by the Holy Ghost. The former is visible and has the body for its object; the latter is spiritual and takes place unseen. The bodily immersion is symbolical; the action of the Holy Spirit is real, and reaches the depths of the soul to purify it.[27]

The very same explanation of the efficacy of Baptism is given by St. Cyril of Jerusalem. The baptismal bath cleanses the twofold nature of man, his soul and his body, because the grace of the Holy Ghost is therein united with the water. When going down into the sacred pond, the catechumen ought not to regard it

zig, 1899), p. 8, or FUNK, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, t. ii, pp. 180–182 (Paderborn, 1905).

[26] *De Spiritu Sancto, Ibid.* Cf. *Constit. Apostol.* vii, 22, 2 (Ed. Funk).

[27] ST. GREG. NAZ., *Oratio* xl, 8; *P.G.*, xxxvi, 368.

merely as common water, but should reflect on the action of the Holy Spirit through which he receives salvation.[28]

The Pauline symbolism of the baptismal immersion is also admirably set forth by St. Cyril to the neophytes. Baptism is the image, ὁμοίωμα, the symbol of Christ's passion: τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων ἀντίτυπον. The threefold immersion signifies "the three days and three nights Our Lord passed in the darkness of the earth." The emersion recalls the resurrection to the true light. The saving water is thus the sepulchre wherein we die to be born again into life, so that, as St. Paul says, we are truly baptized in Christ's death, and engrafted upon Him by a similitude to His death.[29]

The anointing which follows Baptism typifies the Holy Spirit and makes of the neophyte a true Christ: Χριστοὶ δὲ γεγόνατε τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος τὸ ἀντίτυπον δεξάμενοι.[30] For the chrism represents the spiritual unction which the Savior received in His Baptism and which is no other than the Holy Ghost Himself. It is only after we have been anointed with that chrism that we belong truly to Christ (κοινωνοὶ καὶ μέτοχοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενόμενοι). Like the water of Baptism, the chrism owes its efficacy to the presence of the Holy Spirit invoked by the priest. When the oil flows visibly over the body, the soul is interiorly sanctified by that vivifying Spirit.[31]

[28] *Catech.* iii, 3-4.
[29] *Cat. Mystag.*, ii, 4, 6, 7.
[30] *Cat. Mystag.*, iii, 1, 2.
[31] *Cat. Mystag.*, 3.

Hence it is seen that among the Greeks, in the fourth century, the concept of a sacrament as an efficacious symbol had been fully worked out as regards Baptism, the Eucharist and also Confirmation. The distinction between what is sensible, visible, and what is intelligible — a distinction which is the basis of sacramental symbolism — is seen to be at the bottom of all the speculations of the Fathers concerning these Christian rites. This distinction, in a sacrament, of a visible and sensible part, which is the symbol, and of an intelligible part, which is the spiritual effect, is based on man's nature, both bodily and spiritual: God wished to adapt the Sacraments to human nature.

In a comparison between Baptism and the Eucharist, St. John Chrysostom has summed up quite well the Greek conception of a sacrament. Christ's body, he says, cannot be seen in the Eucharist, we must discern it with the eyes of the mind. "For Christ hath given nothing sensible, but in things sensible all is intelligible." Thus, baptismal water can be seen that we may know what takes place in the soul, a spiritual birth and renewal: "For if thou hadst been incorporeal, He would have granted thee incorporeal gifts; but because the soul is united to a body, He delivers thee the things that the mind perceives, in things sensible." [32]

* * *

A similar conception of a sacrament was also growing about the same time, among the Latin Fathers.

[32] *In Matt., hom.* 82, 2, 4.

True it is that, at the outset, the Latin mind, more positive than the more speculative Greek mind, felt less at home in symbolism than the latter. It is only during the fourth century, when Greek works were read in the West, especially by St. Ambrose, that speculative studies concerning the Sacraments received any considerable attention. At the end of the fourth century, St. Augustine, whose culture is decidedly Greek, carried them to a remarkable degree of perfection.

Tertullian is the first Latin ecclesiastical writer who uses the word *sacramentum* to designate Baptism and the Eucharist. This word, as we know, had a great destiny, for, as we shall see later on, it is in the Latin Church that sacramentary theology really developed.

The primary classical sense of the word *sacramentum* is, as some one has said,[33] that of *sacred thing.* Hence, by way of analogy, Tertullian has given to this term, in addition to its former meaning of oath,[34] that of religious doctrine,[35] and of symbolical and sacred rite.[36] It is in this last signification that he applies it to Baptism and to the Eucharist, thereby preluding the formation of the theological language.

Differently from Origen, Tertullian does not frame any theory as regards sacramental symbolism. His altogether materialistic conception of the human soul

[33] A. Réville, *Du sens du mot,* Sacramentum, *dans Tertullien. Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes-Etudes, Sciences religieuses,* vol. i, pp. 194–204. Cf. J. Turmel, *Tertullien,* Paris, 1905, pp. 247 ss.; D'Alès, *La Théologie de Tertullien,* Paris, 1904, pp. 321 sq.

[34] *De Spectac.,* 24; *De Idol.,* 6.

[35] *Apol.,* 47.

[36] *De Baptismo,* 1; *Adv. Marc.* iv, 34.

—" a corporeal substance " [37]— leads him to look upon the Sacraments almost as material causes that sanctify the soul in a material manner.

The waters of Baptism really cleanse the soul, for they have been " impregnated " with the sanctifying power, because of the Spirit which has penetrated them.[38] The imposition of hands, which follows the ablution, diffuses the Holy Spirit, as it were, through our whole being, just as the playing of water-organs draws from them harmonious sounds.[39] The Eucharist fattens the soul with God.[40] Such expressions which are no mere exaggerations of language, warn us not to seek, in Tertullian's writings, for a fully developed symbolism: symbolism rests fundamentally on the distinction between what is material and what is spiritual, between what is sensible and what is purely intelligible; and for Tertullian this distinction amounted to very little.

However, there is, in the Christian rites, an intrinsic symbolism which results from the fitting association of the rite with its effect, and which can be known. Tertullian distinctly realized this rudimentary symbolism. In Baptism, the bodily cleansing is the sign

[37] " Animæ corpus asserimus," *De Anim.*, 9. Cf. TIXERONT, p. 339; TURMEL, p. 242; D'ALÈS, pp. 112 ss. Tertullian adopts the Stoic conception of the soul.

[38] *De Bapt.*, iv.

[39] *Ibid.*, 8. That image is connected with the notion Tertullian had of the origin of Adam's soul. God breathed into the body of the first man as we breathe into a musical instrument. *De Anima*, 3, 4. Adam's soul received from the breathing of God the Holy Spirit and the divine likeness, of which sin deprived him. The laying on of hands, which follows Baptism, restores to man the Spirit of God.

[40] *De Resurrectione carnis*, 8.

of the purification of the soul which takes place; the oil of the unction that flows over the flesh and recalls Christ's spiritual unction, is profitable to the soul;[41] the imposition of hands brings down the Holy Ghost into the Christian, cleansed by the waters of Baptism, just as the use of the fingers contributes to send the air into the pipes of water-organs.[42]

Did Tertullian realize even imperfectly the sacramental symbolism of the Eucharist? Most probably he did not. Several times in his treatise against Marcion[43] he calls the bread the figure of Christ's body: "Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis, corpus illum suum fecit (Christus), *Hoc est corpus meum* dicendo, id est figura corporis mei. Figura autem non fuisset, nisi veritatis esset corpus." Protestants conclude from these words that Tertullian has a decidedly symbolistic concept of the Eucharist; they overlook altogether both the strongly realistic temperament of the great African writer, and his emphatic affirmations of the real presence.[44] Some might be tempted to think that, in this passage, Tertullian considers the bread a symbolic sign containing Christ's body: in that case we should have truly a theory of Eucharistic symbolism. However, such an interpretation of Tertullian's thought is far from correct. It seems rather that, in the treatise against Marcion, the bread is looked upon solely as an Old Testament *prophetical figure* of Christ's body.[45] In his controversy with

[41] *De Bapt.*, vii: "In nobis carnaliter currit unctio, sed spiritaliter proficit: quomodo et ipsius baptismi carnalis actus, quod in aqua mergimur; spiritalis effectus, quod delictis liberamur."

[42] *De Bapt.*, viii, 5.

[43] *Adv. Marc.*, iii, 19; iv, 40.

[44] *De Resurr. carn.*, 8; *De Corona*, 3; *De Idololatria*, 7.

[45] TIXERONT, p. 349.

Marcion, Tertullian was necessarily led to prove to him that there was no antagonism between the two Testaments, since the Old Testament contains many prophecies and figures of Christ's life and passion. In the bread broken through by the wood, of which Jeremiah speaks,[46] Tertullian sees the figure of the Savior's crucified body, a figure fulfilled at the Last Supper, when Jesus "made bread the figure of His body."[47] By means of that figure he proves to Marcion what the latter denied, the reality of the body of Christ. Since that body was typified, it is real; for a nonentity cannot be typified.

Bread is then the figure of Christ's body, not in the Eucharist, but in the Old Testament. Tertullian speaks of the Last Supper, not with the purpose of theorizing about the Eucharist, but to show that in it the figure was actually fulfilled. Here we have no sacramental symbolism, but Biblical allegorism.

On the whole, the conception of a sacrament as a symbol is rather undeveloped in Tertullian's writings: we have tried to show why this should be.

This concept is found to be more developed in St. Cyprian, although as regards the Eucharist only. The Bishop of Carthage outlines a theory of the efficacy of the Sacraments, with an eye to his doctrine concerning rebaptism. The water of Baptism can neither purify nor sanctify, nor can the oil of Confirmation impart the Holy Ghost, nor the Eucharist be valid, unless they have been "sanctified" by the Bishop.[48]

[46] xi, 19.
[47] *Adv. Marc.*, iv, 40.
[48] *Epist.* lxx, 1, 2, (Edit Hartel).

It is this sanctification which imparts to the sacrament all its efficacy, which communicates to the water the Holy Spirit without whose presence the water can neither cleanse nor sanctify;[49] and, as this sanctification can take place only in the Catholic Church, which alone possesses the Holy Ghost, the Sacraments of heretics cannot be valid.[50]

St. Cyprian does not intend to speculate about the symbolism of Baptism and of Confirmation: he contents himself with Tertullian's rudimentary notion. Water signifies the interior ablution of the soul; its significance is preserved whichever way Baptism is given, whether by immersion or by mere aspersion.[51] Oil is the image of the spiritual anointing of the soul.[52]

On the contrary, Eucharistic symbolism is remarkably developed and turned to account. The great defender of the unity of the Church against the Novatians, St. Cyprian sees in the Eucharist, according to St. Paul's teaching, the symbol of that unity.[53] The bread composed, as it is, of many grains of corn that have been ground, represents the faithful united with Christ, forming with Him one mystical body. Likewise, the water mixed with the wine in the chalice, typifies the Christian people united as closely with Christ as the water with the wine, after the mixture. This is why those who celebrate the Eucharist either with water alone — according to the aquarian practice

[49] "Peccata enim purgare et hominem sanctificare aqua sola non potest, nisi habeat Spiritum Sanctum."— *Epist.* lxxiv, 5.

[50] *Epist.* lxx, 1, 2.

[51] *Epist.* lxix, 12.

[52] *Epist.* lxx, 2.

[53] That symbolism is in no way prejudicial to the distinct affirmations of the real presence found in St. Cyprian's writings. Cf. Tixeront, p. 389; Batiffol, pp. 224, ff.

which St. Cyprian vigorously opposes in his letter to Cæcilius,— or with wine alone, not only go counter to the will of Christ, but also do away with the symbolism.[54]

In that same letter to Cæcilius, which is really a treatise on the Eucharist as a sacrifice, St. Cyprian states with wonderful accuracy the relations that exist between the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacrifice offered by Christ at the Last Supper and in His passion. The Eucharistic sacrifice is an exact reproduction of what our Savior did at the Last Supper. It is this exactness which imparts to it all its value, for the Bishop holds the place of Christ and does over again what He did in the cenacle: "Sacerdos vice Christi vere fungitur, qui id quod Christus fecit imitatur, et sacrificium verum et plenum tunc offert in ecclesia Deo Patri, si sic incipiat offerre secundum quod ipsum Christum videat obtulisse." [55] The Eucharist is then a symbol of Christ's sacrifice. Yet it is not a mere symbol: it is also a "true and complete" sacrifice. It is the sacrifice offered by the Savior at the Last Supper and in His Passion:[56] the Eucharistic sacrifice is a representation of Christ's sacrifice, but a representation which truly contains the reality (of that sacrifice). Subsequent authors will hardly find a better expression.

[54] *Epist.* lxiii. The mixture of water and wine in the chalice is looked upon by St. Cyprian as an institution of Christ: "Dominus panem et calicem mixtum vino obtulit." *Ibid.* 4.

[55] *Epist.* lxiii, 14, 9.

[56] "Passio est enim Domini sacrificium quod offerimus."— *Epist.* lxiii, 17.

St. Ambrose has a concept of the efficacy of the Sacraments, quite similar to that of St. Cyprian; but he drew from the Alexandrians, whom he studied with special care, a very rich symbolism, in which his mind moves along with perfect ease.

The baptismal waters are efficacious because the Holy Ghost comes down upon them, as formerly the Angel of old at the pool of Bethesda,[57] and imparts to them by His presence the power of healing the diseases of our souls.[58] It is the "consecration" of the waters, by the prayers of the priest and "the mystery of the cross," which brings the Holy Spirit upon them and grants them a saving power.[59] For what is the water without the Spirit and the Cross of Christ?

Hence the waters of Baptism are not void: they contain a virtue that cannot be seen by our bodily eyes, but is to be discerned by the faith of the Christian.[60]

Baptism is thus in harmony with man's twofold nature: water washes the body, and the Spirit cleanses the soul from the stains of its sins. In that mystery, what is visible is consecrated by the visible element, what is invisible by the invisible element.[61]

[57] *John*, v, 4.

[58] *De Spiritu S.*, i, 88, 77. Cf. *De Mysteriis*, 19: "Aqua non mundat sine Spiritu." That explanation of the efficacy of Baptism is borrowed from St. Basil, whom St. Ambrose follows step by step in his treatise *De Spiritu Sancto*.

[59] *De Spiritu Sancto*, i, 88; *De Mysteriis*, 14: "Elementum commune sine ullo sacramenti effectu."

[60] "Non ergo solis corporis tui credas oculis: magis videtur quod non videtur; quia istud temporale, illud æternum aspicitur, quod oculis non comprehenditur, animo autem ac mente cernitur." *De Mysteriis*, 15, 20, 21.

[61] *In Lucam*, ii, 79: "Nam cum ex duabus naturis homo, id

The external order falling under our senses, is clearly distinguished from the intelligible order, of which it is the symbol. Our readers will recognize here the influence of Greek thought upon St. Ambrose.

The symbolism of each one of the ceremonies which accompany Baptism, is explained by the Bishop of Milan in his treatise "De Mysteriis." The immersion is the image of death to sin buried in the waters.[62] The unction of Confirmation recalls the unction formerly traced upon Aaron's head and beard; it typifies the spiritual unction by which we are anointed members of the kingdom of God and priests. The washing of the feet, a ceremony peculiar to the Church of Milan, is the sign of the cleansing from the hereditary guilt. The white garments put on by the neophytes after their Baptism are symbolical of restored innocence.[63]

The sacramental symbolism of the Eucharist is stated by St. Ambrose with a remarkable precision, owing to his already most explicit doctrine of the Eucharistic transubstantiation. The "divine consecration" of the Eucharist, produced "by the very words of Christ," "changes the nature" of bread and wine and "makes it the sacrament of our Savior's Body and Blood." When we contemplate that mystery, even less than for Baptism ought we to stop at what is seen. What is seen is the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, that is to say, the sign, the symbol under which

est, ex anima subsistat et corpore, visibile per visibilia, invisibile per invisibile mysterium consecratur. Aqua enim corpus abluitur, spiritu animae delicta mundantur."

[62] *De Spiritu Sancto,* I, 76.

[63] *De Mysteriis,* 30, 32, 34.

Christ's Body and Blood are really present: "Forte dicas: aliud video, quomodo tu mihi asseris quod Christi corpus accipiam? . . . Probemus non hoc esse quod natura formavit, sed quod benedictio consecravit. . . . Quod si tantum valuit humana benedictio, ut naturam converteret (*3 Reg.*, xviii, 38), quid dicimus de ipsa consecratione divina, ubi verba ipsa Domini Salvatoris operantur? Nam sacramentum istud quod accipis, Christi sermone conficitur. . . . Ante benedictionem verborum cœlestium alia species nominatur, post consecrationem corpus significatur." [64] Thus we find a conception of Eucharistic symbolism, as perfect as that which we met in the *Catecheses* of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.[65]

Thus it is seen that the elaboration of the concept of a sacrament as an efficacious symbol was almost completed at the end of the period previous to St. Augustine. Baptism and the Eucharist are looked upon as symbols, which manifest the unseen realities they produce or contain. They are made up of two parts: the one, external and visible, called σύμβολον, τύπος, by the Greeks, and *Sacramentum,* by the Latins; the other, unseen, which is the power of the Holy Ghost producing baptismal regeneration, or Christ's Body and Blood. The same conception is applied, to some extent, to the rite of Confirmation. As to the symbolism of Marriage, in their commentaries on the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Fathers added nothing to what St. Paul had already said on the sub-

[64] *De Mysteriis,* 50, 52, 54.

[65] The sacramental symbolism of the author of *De Sacramentis* is identical with that of St. Ambrose.

ject.[66] When they speak of the other Sacraments, the Fathers mention their effects, without making use of the notion of efficacious symbol. Sacramental symbolism was applied later on to Ordination by St. Augustine,[67] to the anointing of the sick by Pope Innocent I,[68] and to Penance chiefly by St. Peter Damian.[69]

But before St. Augustine, nobody ever thought of abstracting, as it were, the concept of efficacious symbol, in order to consider it by itself and frame its theory. Hence, to show its historical development, we have been obliged to expose the doctrine of the Fathers concerning Baptism and the Eucharist, that doctrine being conceived in direct dependence on the idea of efficacious symbol. St. Augustine was the first formally to distinguish, by opposing one to the other, the visible part of the sacrament — the *sacramentum* — and its unseen part — the *virtus sacramenti*.[70] This clear distinction enabled him to sketch a definition properly so called of a sacrament.

§ II. *The Augustinian Definition of a Sacrament.*

Two conceptions of a sacrament are met with in St. Augustine: the one quite general and applied indiscriminately to any kind of rite, is that of sacrament as "a mere sign;" the other, more precise, and applied exclusively to certain rites, particularly to the

[66] Cf. St. John Chrysos., *In Eph. hom.* xx, 4; S. Ambros., *In Epist., ad Eph.*, v.

[67] *De Bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 2, etc.

[68] *Epist. ad Decentium*, 8; Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum*, n. 61 (new ed., n. 99).

[69] *Sermo* lxix; *P.L.*, cxliv, 901.

[70] *In Joan.*, tract. xxvi, 11: "Aliud est sacramentum, aliud virtus sacramenti."

Eucharist and to Baptism, is that of sacrament as a "sign with which a gift, an objective effect is connected." We begin with the latter.

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In its most restricted meaning, the Augustinian sacrament is a sacred sign which calls forth the idea of a religious thing, of which it is the image; that sign is a material element; with that sign is connected the spiritual gift which is signified and is destined to sanctify man; the efficient cause of a sacrament, viz., that which makes the material element the sign of a spiritual reality, and joins to that element the gift of the spiritual reality thus signified, is the formula of blessing used by the minister; finally the institutor of the Sacraments is Jesus Christ. Thus we have the four essential ideas of St. Augustine's definition; not all of them are peculiar to the holy Doctor; some are borrowed from previous authors, especially from St. Ambrose.

It is when he explains the first idea, that St. Augustine shows most originality. There is in a sacrament, a very close relation of meaning between the sacramental rite and its effects, between the baptismal ablution, for instance, and the cleansing of the soul. St. Augustine stated with wonderful accuracy this relation of signification by means of the concept of sign. This concept the Bishop of Hippo owes to the Alexandrians; from them he borrowed also a complete theory of the sign, which he set forth in two of his works, *De Doctrina Christiana*[70a] and *De Magistro*. Here we see what services philosophy may render to

[70a] Lib. II.

dogma, by supplying ecclesiastical writers with concepts that may help them to express with more precision the traditional doctrine.

The sign, says St. Augustine, is an object, the external appearances of which suggest the idea of another object;[71] the footsteps of an animal are a sign of its passage, smoke is a sign of fire, the cry of a living being tells what the latter wishes, the sound of a trumpet makes known the movement of an army. The most expressive signs are words by which we manifest the sentiments of our souls. The Sacraments are signs because they are material and sensible objects,— bread, wine, water, for instance, which bring before our minds spiritual and religious objects: "Ista [panis et calix], fratres, ideo dicuntur sacramenta, quia in eis aliud videtur, aliud intelligitur. Quod videtur, speciem habet corporalem, quod intelligitur, fructum habet spiritualem."[72] The bodily ablution in Baptism is a visible sign of what takes place in the soul: "Aqua sacramenti visibilis est . . . abluit corpus, et significat quod fit in anima."[73]

But that the relation existing in the Sacraments, between the sensible sign and the signified thing, may be still closer, it must be a relation of similitude; the sign must be the image of the signified thing. "Si enim sacramenta quamdam similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt, non haberent, sacramenta non essent."[74] Hence the sacramental signs

[71] *De Doct. Christ.*, i, 1, 4: "Signum est res praeter speciem quam ingerit sensibus, aliud aliquid ex se faciens in cogitationem venire." This is the definition of a sign that has already been explained.

[72] *Sermo* cclxxii. Cf. *In Joan.*, xxvi, 11.

[73] *In Epist. Joan., ad Parth.*, vi, 11.

[74] *Epist.* xcviii, 7.

belong to the category of natural signs (signa naturalia), as well as that of conventional signs (signa data), since the relation which unites the sign with the signified thing, rests as much on the nature of things as on a divine conception.[75] Thus it is that chrism is the visible sign of the Holy Ghost (Sacramentum Spiritus Sancti), for oil keeps up fire. Now the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles in the shape of tongues of fire; it is He too who after the baptism of neophytes, bakes them in the flames of charity, and makes of them that bread which is Christ's mystical body.[76]

Any sign that signifies a spiritual and religious object is then a "sacramentum," for according to St. Augustine, the religious significance of the sign is essential to the sacrament. A profane sign which calls up the idea of a profane thing, is not, and must not be called a sacrament. "Signa cum ad res divinas pertinent sacramenta appellantur."[77] Consequently a sacrament is defined a sacred sign,[78] that is to say, a sign which brings before the mind the idea of a religious thing, and which is also its image.

This first part of the definition of the "sacramentum" will become classical. All the authors who come after St. Augustine will define a sacrament: "Signum sacrum," or again "Signum rei sacrae;" and, following in the footsteps of St. Thomas, modern theologians remark that a sacrament belongs to the category of signs, "Sacramentum est in genere sig-

[75] Cf. *De Doctrina Christiana,* ii, 2, 3.
[76] *Sermo* ccxxvii.
[77] *Epist.* cxxxviii, 7.
[78] *De Civitate Dei,* x, 5. Sacramentum, id est sacrum signum.

ni." [79] Yet it is not a mere sign, it is an efficacious sign, which produces what it signifies. The Augustinian definition which is quite precise, when it says that a sacrament is a sign, is rather less so as regards the efficacy of that sign.

If St. Augustine did not state with full precision the efficacy of the sacramental sign, he did not teach either that a sacrament is a mere sign, void of all reality. Had he done so, he would have set himself in opposition to the traditional doctrine of his predecessors. No, between the sign and the signified object there is more than a mere relation of meaning. An objective gift is joined to the sign; that gift is received by the subject of the sacrament when he is properly disposed, and that gift is precisely what is signified by the sign; it is the " virtus," the " res sacramenti." The Eucharistic bread and wine are " visible food; " those who feed on it, whether adults or infants, receive in themselves " a spiritual fruit," which is life.[80] The gift of Baptism is the spiritual and unseen cleansing of the soul, figured by the bodily ablution.[81] It is, in other words, the regeneration of the soul: " Sacramentum autem baptismi profecto sacramentum regenerationis est." [82] The virtue of the sacrament of chrism is the Holy Ghost, which is imparted to the soul, and produces in it love.[83] That gift which is bound up with the sacrament, and varies according to the nature of the rite, is, after all, nothing else than

[79] St. Thom., *Summ. Theol.*, 3ª p., quaest. 60, art. 1.
[80] *In Joan., tract.* xxvi, 11; xxvii, 5; *Sermo* clxxiv, 7.
[81] *Quaest. in Heptat.*, iv, xxiii.
[82] *De peccat. meritis et rem.*, ii, 43.
[83] *In Epist. Joan. ad Parthos*, tract. vi, 10.

grace, "gratia, quae sacramentorum virtus est."[84]

The distinction between the "sacramentum" and the gift connected with it, is such that sometimes the two may be completely separated. We may have the "sacramentum" without the "virtus sacramenti"; this occurs, when the subject is improperly disposed. Heretics and schismatics administer the Sacraments, but as they are outside the unity, and therefore outside the sphere of action of the Holy Ghost, they cannot have the spiritual fruit of those Sacraments.[85] They may have indeed the visible sacrament of the chrism, which may exist in the just for their salvation, and in the wicked for their condemnation; they have not the unseen unction of charity, which exists only in the just.[86] Simon the magician received Baptism, the "sacrament of piety;" but he had only the "form of piety," he had not its "virtue."[87]

According to St. Augustine, a spiritual gift is joined with the sacramental sign; this gift is objective; it is not created by the faith of the subject, since children receive it,[88] and yet are unable to make acts of faith. Some dispositions however are required in an adult, that he may share in the "virtus sacramenti."

But what is the nature of the bond which unites the spiritual gift with the sacramental rite? Is it a bond of causality or of mere concomitance? To this St. Augustine does not give a precise answer. This question is beyond his horizon altogether. What he had directly in view, is the fact of the union of the

[84] *Enarr. in Psalm,* lxxvii, 2.
[85] *Sermo* lxxi, 32.
[86] *Contr. litt. Petil.,* ii, 239.
[87] *Contra Faust.,* xix, cap. xii.
[88] *Epist.* xcviii, 10; *Sermo* clxxiv, 7.

sacramental sign with the spiritual gift which it signifies. When the minister performs the external rite, Christ or the Holy Ghost produces infallibly in the soul of the subject, grace and other effects of the Sacraments: "Ecce quia Christus etiam ipso lavacro aquae in verbo ubi ministri corporaliter videntur operari, ipse abluit, ipse mundat. Nemo ergo sibi arroget quod Dei est." [89] The divine sanctifying action always accompanies the conferring of the sacrament, unless the subject is not properly disposed:

"Dominus [sanctificat] invisibili gratia per Spiritum Sanctum, ubi est totus fructus etiam visibilium sacramentorum. Nam sine ista sanctificatione invisibilis gratiae, visibilia sacramenta quid prosunt? . . . Nihil quippe profuit Simoni mago visibilis baptismus, cui sanctificatio invisibilis defuit." [90]

The sanctification that takes place in the soul when the minister performs the rite is so truly the result of the divine action, that St. Augustine looks upon the sacrament as the work of Christ himself, acting through His Church, and sanctifying the faithful.[91] The nature of the bond which unites the spiritual gift to the sacramental rite is not, then, very clearly stated in the Augustinian definition. Mediæval theologians will attempt to do so, by affirming that this bond is one of causality.

[89] *Contr. litt. Petil.*, iii, 59. An analogous idea is expressed in *Epist.* xcviii, 2. "Aqua igitur exhibens forinsecus sacramentum gratiæ, et Spiritus operans intrinsecus beneficium gratiæ, solvens vinculum culpæ, reconcilians bonum naturæ, regenerant hominem in uno Christo, ex uno Adamo generatum."

[90] *Quaest. in Heptat.*, lib. iii, cap. 84.

[91] The Augustinian notion of a sacrament will be fully treated in the 3d. chapter.

St. Augustine's teaching about the efficient cause of the sacrament is the same as that of St. Ambrose and of St. Cyprian. The priest's blessing makes the sacrament, viz. imparts to the material element its sacramental signification, and connects with that material element an objective spiritual gift.

This action of the word in the making of the sacramental sign is considered by St. Augustine as essential:

"Detrahe verbum, et quid est aqua nisi aqua? Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum, etiam ipsum tanquam visibile verbum." [92]

The doctrine is accounted for by the Augustinian theory of signs, exposed in the *De Doctrina Christiana.*[93] Men manifest their thoughts and feelings by two kinds of signs: gestures and words. But the more expressive signs are words, for, after all, gestures are simply words made visible, "visibilia verba." Hence a material element, that has received the word of blessing, becomes the sensible sign of the spiritual object expressed by the word; it becomes the visible word, "visibile verbum," which expresses the spiritual object. It is the word of blessing that makes water a "sacramentum," that is to say, a sign of the spiritual cleansing of the soul; it is also the word of sanctification that makes bread and wine the "*sacramentum*" of Christ's Body and Blood.[94]

As we have seen, an objective spiritual gift is united with the sacramental sign; it is also the word

[92] *In Joan.*, tract. lxxx, 3.

[93] ii, 4. Cf. *Contr. Faust.*, xix, c. 16.

[94] *Contra Faust.*, xx, 13; *Sermo* ccxxxiv, 12. Cf. P. Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, pp. 237 and ss.

of blessing that brings about this union and thus constitutes the sacrament in all its reality. Baptismal water could not purify, unless it had been "consecrated" by the sign of the cross, in the name of Christ,[95] and unless it was accompanied by the words of the Gospel:

"Unde ista tanta virtus aquae, ut corpus tangat et cor abluat, nisi faciente verbo: non quia dicitur sed quia creditur? Nam et in ipso verbo, aliud est sonus transiens, aliud virtus manens."[96]

That action of the word in the making of the sacrament is objective, since it unites the spiritual gift to the water of Baptism, to the oil of Confirmation, and to the Eucharistic bread and wine.

Hence St. Augustine's teaching regarding the efficient cause of the sacrament is the same teaching we have met already in St. Ambrose and in St. Cyprian. However, the adversary of Donatism carefully abstains from subordinating, as the adversary of Pope St. Stephen had done, the value of the minister's blessing to his faith or sanctity. The sacrament holds its value from God. Therefore, whatever may be the state of the minister's soul, the blessing he utters is valid:

"Si ergo ad hoc valet quod dictum est in Evangelio, *Deus peccatorem non audit* (*Joan.*, IX, 31), ut per peccatorem sacramenta non celebrentur; quomodo exaudit homicidam deprecantem, vel super aquam baptismi, vel super oleum, vel

[95] *Sermo* ccclii, 3: Sed quia baptismus, id est, salutis aqua non est salutis, nisi Christi nomine consecrata, qui pro nobis sanguinem fudit, cruce ipsius aqua signatur.

[96] *In Joan., tract.* lxxx, 3. Cf. *De Bapt. contr. Donat.*, vii, 102.

super eucharistiam, vel super capita eorum quibus manus imponitur? Quae omnia tamen et fiunt et valent etiam per homicidas, id est per eos qui oderunt fratres, etiam in ipsa intus Ecclesia." [97]

Finally, it is in virtue of the will of Christ, who instituted the Sacraments, that the minister's word can make a material object an efficacious sacramental sign. The divine institution is an essential element of the Augustinian definition of the sacrament in the restricted meaning. But, as this most comprehensive definition applies chiefly to Baptism and to the Eucharist, it is also on the divine institution of these two Sacraments that St. Augustine insists most strongly:

"Quaedam pauca [signa] . . . ipse Dominus et apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum et celebratio corporis et sanguinis Domini." [98]

When He established the Sacraments, Christ intended to sanctify men and to create means of union, social bonds, between the members of the Church:

"[Christus] sacramentis numero paucissimis, observatione facillimis, significatione praestantissimis, societatem novi populi colligavit, sicuti est baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius et si quid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur." [99]

For no religion, true or false, can stand without rallying signs.[1] That teaching of St. Augustine concern-

[97] *De Bapt. contr. Donat.*, v, 28; Cf. iii, 15.
[98] *De Doctrina Christ.*, iii, 13. Cf. *Enarr. in psalm.* lxxxiii, 2.
[99] *Epist.* liv, 1; cf. *In Joan.*, tr. cxx, 2.
[1] *Contr. Faust.*, xix, 11.

ing the social function of the Sacraments has become classical.

In the restricted sense, a sacrament then is a material sign of a spiritual object of which it is the image, instituted by Jesus Christ, and with which is connected, by the formula of the minister's blessing, the spiritual object signified, which is destined to sanctify men.[2]

This definition is nowhere formulated in St. Augustine's writings;[3] the ideas of which it is made up are developed here and there, and the historian who brings them together in a synthesis is exposed to the risk of outrunning the thought of the Bishop of Hippo. St. Augustine actually formulated only the first part, the generic term of the definition: a Sacrament is a sacred sign of a spiritual object.[4] Especially when speaking of Baptism and of the Eucharist, he did not pass by its specific element, viz. the efficacy of that sign. But he did not insert it in his formula; and this will not be done before the 12th. century. This accounts for the fact that St. Augustine and all the ecclesiastical writers, until Peter Lombard, give the name " sacramentum " indiscriminately to all kinds of rites.

* * *

As a matter of fact, that most general conception of a sacrament as a mere sign is often met with in St.

[2] Cf. HARNACK, *History of Dogma*, vol. 5, pp. 156–162.

[3] The formula which comes the nearest to it is that of the letter to Januarius, *Epist.* lv, 2: Sacramentum est autem in aliqua celebratione, cum rei gestae commemoratio ita fit, ut aliquid etiam significari intelligatur, quod sancte accipiendum est.

[4] *De Civitate Dei*, x, 5.

Augustine's writings. It is applied to all religious rites, which are, in some way or other, the signs of a spiritual reality.[5] The special character of a sacrament as a mere sign, lies precisely in signifying a spiritual reality which it does not produce: in other words, in being an ineffective symbol. Hence the difference which distinguishes it from a sacrament in the restricted sense, is important. Except circumcision,[6] the Mosaic rites did not impart salvation, they merely promised it;[7] they were intended to announce Christ and to remind the Jews of the divine promises;[8] they were then, figurative signs, "sacramenta" of the Christian realities, and nothing more.

It is also in this rather impoverished sense that St. Augustine calls Sacraments the rites pertaining to Catechumens, and the ceremonies preparatory to Baptism. The blessed salt which Catechumens used to receive in Africa all through the year, is a "sacramentum." That salt has become, through the priest's blessing, the sign of a religious thing, namely of Christian doctrine, a true moral seasoning of which salt is the image.[9] For this reason, that salt is something more holy than ordinary food: it is a sacred symbol.[10] In a similar sense, St. Augustine applies the term Sacraments to the rites of the "traditio" of the Creed

[5] In the East, about the end of the 5th. century, the word *μυστήριον* had likewise a most extensive and rather undetermined meaning. It was used to designate any sacred and symbolic ceremony. Cf. for instance, the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* by Pseudo-Dionysius.

[6] *Epist.* clxxxvii, 34.

[7] *Enarr. in Psal.* lxxiii, 2.

[8] *Contr. Faust.*, xix, 11, 12, 13.

[9] *Catech. rud.*, 50.

[10] *De peccat. merit.*, ii, 42.

and the Lord's Prayer,[11] as well as to the exorcisms made over the candidates for Baptism.[12] Likewise Christian marriage is looked upon by St. Augustine, although with some important shades of difference, as a "sacramentum," because, inasmuch as it signifies and figures the union of Christ with His Church,[13] it is the symbol of a spiritual and religious reality.

§ III. *The Definition of a Sacrament according to Mediæval writers.*

The attention of ecclesiastical writers, chiefly after the 9th. century, was specially drawn to the study of the Sacraments. The need made itself felt of setting forth, in synthetic treatises, both the Christian doctrine which must be taught, and the liturgical rules which are to be followed in administering the Sacraments.[14] Moreover, St. Augustine had settled the doctrine of sin and of salvation; and the subsequent writers quite naturally took up specially the means appointed for the remission of sins and for salvation. In the beginning of the 12th. century, Abelard divides the *Introductio ad Theologiam* and the *Sic et Non* into three parts, corresponding to the three means necessary for salvation: "Tria sunt, ut arbitror, in quibus humanae salutis summa consistit, fides videlicet, charitas et sacramentum." [15] The "Sententiae" of Roland begins in the same way.[16] According to

[11] *Sermo* ccxxviii, 3.
[12] *Sermo* ccxxvii.
[13] *De bono conjug.*, 21.
[14] The realization of this need led Rabanus Maurus to compose his treatise *De Clericorum Institutione.*
[15] *Introd. ad Theol.* lib. i, 1; *P.L.*, clxxviii, 981.
[16] Gietl, *Die Sentenzen Rolands,* Freiburg im B. 1891, p. 1.

Hugh of St. Victor,[17] faith, the sacraments of faith, and good works are also the three means necessary for salvation. Is it any wonder, then, that during the first part of the Middle Ages, the doctrine of the Sacraments progressed, and that particularly the definition of a sacrament was improved?

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* *

The notion of a sacrament, proposed by St. Isidore of Seville,[18] deserves a special mention; it had a considerable success, since, until the 11th. century, it was reproduced by the greater number of ecclesiastical writers.

St. Isidore quotes the definition given by St. Augustine in his letter to Januarius (*Epist.* lv, 2):

"Sacramentum est in aliqua celebratione, cum res gesta ita fit ut aliquid significare intelligatur, quod sancte accipiendum est."

But, instead of explaining that formula by means of the Augustinian theory of a sacrament, St. Isidore, faithful to the method followed in his "Etymologies," appeals to the etymology of the word "sacramentum." "Sacramentum," he says, is derived from "secretum": it is the exact synonym of "mysterium" among the Greeks. Hence St. Isidore does not define a sacrament dependently on the idea of sign, but dependently on that of secret. Baptism, the chrism, the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood are called Sacraments, because, under the cover of material bodies, there is hidden the divine action, which produces invisibly the effects proper to those Sacraments:

[17] *De Sacramentis*, lib. i, pars ix, cap. viii; *P.L.*, clxxvi, 317.
[18] *Etymol.*, lib. vi, cap. xix, 39 sq.; *P.L.*, lxxxii, 255.

"Sunt autem sacramenta baptismus et chrisma, corpus et sanguis. Quae ob id sacramenta dicuntur, quia sub tegumento corporalium rerum virtus divina secretius salutem eorumdem sacramentorum operatur, unde et a *secretis* virtutibus, vel a *sacris* sacramenta dicuntur. Quae ideo fructuose penes Ecclesiam fiunt, quia sanctus in ea manens Spiritus eorumdem sacramentorum latenter operatur effectum." [19]

Thus a sacrament is like a mystery: [20] its special character consists in concealing, under the appearances of a material object, the action of the Holy Ghost, which accomplishes in secret the salvation of the soul.

That eagerness with which St. Isidore had recourse to etymology in order to define a sacrament, resulted, then, in throwing the idea of sign into the background. This result was not fortunate. As we will see later on, whenever the definition departed from the idea of sign, it lost something of its precision; this is proved by the Isidorian definition. All the authors of the 9th, century adopted it.[21] Paschasius Radbert [22] and Ratramnus [23] used it to set forth their Eucharistic doctrine. Moreover, Paschasius Radbert applied it to the Incarnation, which is a "magnum quoddam sacramentum," because, in Christ's visible humanity, the divinity acted interiorly, in secret.[24] Somewhat later, not only the Incarnation, but all the mysteries of the Catholic faith will be called Sacraments: a confusion which impeded the development

[19] *Etymol., Ibid.* Cf. St. Greg. the Gr., *In I Regum,* lib. vi, 3.

[20] "Unde et graece mysterium dicitur quod secretum et reconditam habeat dispositionem."

[21] Rabanus Maurus, *De Instit. Cleric.,* lib. I, cap. xxiv; *P.L.,* cvii, 309.

[22] *De Corpore et Sang. Domini,* cap. iii; *P.L.,* cxx, 1275.

[23] *De Corpore et Sang. Domini,* xlv, and ff.; *P L.,* cxxi, 116.

[24] Paschasius Radbert, *De Corp. et Sang. Domini,* cap. iii.

of the Catholic doctrine concerning the number of the Sacraments, and which originated with the Isidorian definition.

* * *

At the beginning of the 12th. century, scholars came back to the Augustinian formula: "Sacramentum est signum sacrum — signum rei sacrae." Abelard [25] contributed to give currency to another formula, ascribed by Roland [26] to St. Augustine: *"Sacramentum est visibile signum invisibilis gratiae Dei."* Henceforth, that idea of sign will be very seldom, if ever, lost sight of; it will render possible, at last, the complete formation of the definition of a sacrament.

The school of St. Victor, represented by Hugh, began this final work. Hugh summed up in a formula all the ideas St. Augustine had exposed here and there in his works. That synthesis resulted in the rejection of the Isidorian definition, and in the adoption of another formula more comprehensive and true.

The ancient doctors, Hugh remarks in his *De Sacramentis* [27] defined a sacrament: *sacrae rei signum;* for in a sacrament there is the visible, exterior sign, which is the material element, and the spiritual, unseen grace, signified by the sign, which is called *res sive virtus sacramenti.* But that definition is imperfect, for not every sign is a sacrament: a word, a painting are signs, and yet nobody says they are sac-

[25] *Introd. ad Theolog.,* lib. I, 2. In *Epitome,* xxviii, a sacrament is thus defined: sacrae rei signum.

[26] *Sent. Rol.,* p. 155. This formula is not found in the writings of St. Augustine; it has been formed by the juxtaposition of two Augustinian expressions, see above p. 28.

[27] Lib. I, pars ix, cap. 2; *P.L.,* clxxvi, 317.

raments. Then the author proposes this definition which shows a considerable improvement on the previous works:

"Sacramentum est corporale vel materiale elementum foris sensibiliter propositum ex similitudine repraesentans, et ex institutione significans, et ex sanctificatione continens aliquam invisibilem et spiritualem gratiam."

According to the explanation given by Hugh himself, this definition comprises three essential ideas: the fitness of the material or bodily element to represent, because of a natural similarity, what it signifies; the divine institution by which the relation of signification between the corporeal element and grace is actually established; finally, the sanctification by the priest, which fills with grace the bodily element and renders it capable of imparting that grace to the subject. These are, as is easily seen, St. Augustine's ideas; but they are expressed with more precision and enriched with new data. Hugh exposes them as follows:

"Ut ergo in uno sacramento ea quae de omnibus dicta sunt tria haec qualiter sint agnoscamus, aquam baptismatis pro exemplo assumimus. Ibi enim est aquae visibile elementum quod est sacramentum, et inveniuntur haec tria in uno: repraesentatio ex similitudine, significatio ex institutione, virtus ex sanctificatione. Ipsa similitudo ex creatione est; ipsa institutio ex dispensatione; ipsa sanctificatio ex benedictione. Prima indita per Creatorem; secunda adjuncta per Salvatorem; tertia ministrata per dispensatorem. Est ergo aqua visibilis sacramentum, et gratia invisibilis, res sive virtus sacramenti. Habet autem omnis aqua ex naturali qualitate similitudinem quamdam cum gratia Spiritus Sancti; quia, sicut haec abluit sordes corporum, ita illa mundat inquinamenta animarum. . . . Venit autem Salvator et instituit visibilem aquam per ablutionem corporum ad signifi-

candam invisibilem, per spiritalem gratiam, emundationem animarum. . . . Sed quia haec duo, sicut diximus, nondum adhuc sufficiunt ad perfectionem, accedit verbum sanctificationis ad elementum et fit sacramentum, ut sit sacramentum aqua visibilis ex similitudine repraesentans, ex institutione significans, ex sanctificatione continens spiritualem gratiam. Ad hunc modum in caeteris quoque sacramentis haec tria considerare oportet." [28]

In order to become a sacrament, the material element must, then, present some features of natural likeness with what it is called to signify: water, for instance, is most apt to signify the cleansing of the soul: a thought which we have met with already in St. Augustine. The relation of signification, between the material element and grace, was established by Christ, the institutor of the sacrament. On this point Hugh parts company with St. Augustine, according to whom that relation of signification was brought about by the minister's blessing. In the new theory, that blessing has for its only purpose to sanctify the material element, and to "fill it with grace." For, according to Hugh, the sacrament, that is to say, the material element sanctified by the priest, contains grace, somewhat as a "vessel" [29] contains the medicine which will cure a sick man:

"Quod enim elementa sacramenta sunt, non natura prima fecit; sed apposita institutio per dispensationem, et gratia infusa per benedictionem. . . . Primum Creator per majestatem vasa formavit, postea Salvator per institutionem eadem proposuit; postremo dispensator per benedictionem haec ipsa mundavit et gratia implevit." [29a]

[28] *De Sacramentis, Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*, cap. iv: Si ergo vasa sunt spiritualis gratiæ sacramenta, non ex suo sanant, quia vasa ægrotum non curant, sed medicina.

[29a] *Ibid.*, c. iv.

That conception of sacramental efficacy outruns by far St. Augustine's conception. The blessing of the material element by the priest does not merely connect with that element a spiritual gift: it "fills" that element with grace: and then, the sacrament confers to the subject the grace it "contains." Hence the doctrine of sacramental efficacy, set forth in Hugh's *De Sacramentis* is a great and almost excessive improvement on St. Augustine's doctrine, and on that of the early mediæval writers; it prepares and forebodes the Lombardian conception of the sacrament, as cause of grace.

And yet, Hugh's definition is not sufficiently exact: in spite of what its author says, it does not apply "omni sacramento solique." Its chief imperfection comes from its not being conceived dependently on the idea of sign; according to Hugh, a sacrament is not, in a general way, a sign of grace; it is essentially a material element. The author of *De Sacramentis* calls sacrament what we now call the "matter" of the sacrament. A serious drawback of his definition consists in taking only a part of the sacrament for its whole, and in discarding from the number of the Sacraments, rites which, like ordination and matrimony, are not made up of corporeal elements.[30] It was then necessary to come back to the idea of sign, and to seek, in the efficacy of the sacramental sign, for the distinctive and specific feature of the definition of a sacrament.

This is the method employed with success by the un-

[30] This defective definition actually prevented Hugh from drawing up an exact list of the Sacraments; he confounds them

known author of the *Summa Sententiarum.*[31] No doubt, this author draws his inspiration from Hugh's works; from them he borrows his theory on the efficacy of the Sacraments of the Old Law, which could truly sanctify man,[32] his views concerning the motives that prompted God to institute the Sacraments,[33] and several other ideas. But, he goes farther than Hugh in most points of the doctrine; and as regards particularly the definition of a sacrament, he contributed much towards making it more exact.

Hugh defined Baptism: the water sanctified by the word of God. According to the author of the *Summa,* that language is quite inappropriate. For him, Baptism is a compound of the immersion and of the invocation of the Trinity: the water and the immersion are the *Sacramentum* of Baptism, the invocation of the Trinity is its *forma.*[34] In all the Sacraments, he discerns the *sacramentum* which is the external sign by which the *res sacramenti* is signified. He is thus led to make, like St. Augustine, the general notion of sign the foundation of the definition of a sacrament; it is in efficacy that he rightly seeks for the specific mark which distinguishes the sacramental sign from any other sign:

with the sacramentals. Cf. the criticism of that definition by St. Thomas: *IV Sent.,* Dist. I, quaest. 1, art. 1, and *Sum. Theol.,* 3 p. quaest. 66, art. 1.

[31] *Summa Sent., P.L.,* clxxvi, 42–174. We think that the *Sum. Sent.* is not the work of Hugh of St. Victor, but that it is posterior to him. Cf. Portalié, *Dict. de Théol. Cath.,* art. "Abélard." A comparison of the notion of Sacrament in *De Sacramentis* and in *Summa Sent.* strengthens this belief.

[32] *Summa Sent.,* tract. iv, cap. i; cf. *De Sacramentis,* lib. 1, pars xi, cap. i.

[33] *Summa Sent., Ibid.* Cf. *De Sacramentis,* lib. 1, p. ix, cap. iii.

[34] *Sum. Sent.,* tract. v, cap. i, iii, iv.

"Quid sit sacramentum, quare institutum et in quibus constat. Augustinus: Sacramentum est sacrae rei signum. Idem: Sacramentum est invisibilis gratiae visibilis forma, ut in sacramento baptismatis figuratur ablutio interior per illam exteriorem et visibilem. Unumquodque enim sacramentum ejus rei similitudinem debet habere cujus est sacramentum. Unde Augustinus: Si enim sacramenta quamdam similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt non haberent, omnino sacramenta non essent. Opponitur quod praedicta definitio non solis competat sacramentis, cum et ante sanctificationem hoc congruat aquae ut sit visibilis forma invisibilis gratiae; quia, sicut aqua auferuntur sordes corporis, ita per gratiam sordes animae. Sed ut solis sacramentis competat, sic intelligendum est: Sacramentum est visibilis forma invisibilis gratiae in eo collatae, quam scilicet confert ipsum sacramentum. Non enim est solummodo sacrae rei signum, sed etiam efficacia. Et hoc est quod distat inter signum et sacramentum; quia ad hoc ut sit signum non aliud exigit nisi ut illud significet cujus perhibetur signum, non ut conferat. Sacramentum vero non solum significat, sed etiam confert illud cujus est signum vel significatio. Iterum hoc interest; quia signum potest esse pro sola significatione quamvis careat similitudine, ut circulus vini; sed sacramentum non solum ex institutione significat, sed etiam ex similitudine repraesentat." [35]

That notion of a sacrament is almost definitive; it enabled the author of the *Summa* to apply the name of sacrament exclusively to the Mosaic rites and to six of our Sacraments. Very little indeed remains for Peter Lombard to do, that he may formulate his celebrated definition, which enabled him to draw up the first accurate list of the seven Sacraments.

The *Fourth Book* of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard opens with a definition of a sacrament which is

[35] *Sum. Sent.*, tract. iv, cap. i.

similar to that given in the *Summa* and which was reached by means of an identical method.[36] The specific character which distinguishes a sacrament from anything else is the efficacy:

"Sacramentum est sacrae rei signum. . . . Omne enim sacramentum est signum, sed non e converso. Sacramentum ejus rei similitudinem gerit, cujus signum est. Si enim sacramenta non haberent similitudinem rerum quarum sacramenta sunt, proprie sacramenta non dicerentur. *Sacramentum enim proprie dicitur quod ita signum est gratiae Dei, et invisibilis gratiae forma, ut ipsius imaginem gerat et causa existat.* Non ergo significandi tantum gratia sacramenta instituta sunt, sed etiam sanctificandi. Quae enim significandi gratia tantum instituta sunt, solum signa sunt, et non sacramenta; sicut fuerunt sacrificia carnalia, et observantiae caeremoniales veteris legis."[37]

Henceforth the name of sacrament will be applied only to those rites of the Church which sanctify by themselves, which are "causes" of grace, that is to our seven Sacraments of which Peter Lombard gives the definitive list.[38]

The Lombardian conception of a sacrament contains several new data, which are destined to become classical. The first, and the chief one, is the application of the philosophical idea of cause to the notion of sacrament. What distinguishes a sacrament from all other signs is that it is a cause of grace. The use made by Peter of the concept of cause, to express

[36] The earliest treatise strictly so called of the Sacraments in general is to be found in the fourth book of Peter Lombard's *Sentences.* However, we must remark that the rough draught of that treatise was supplied by the *Summa* (tract. iv–vii), which strongly influenced Peter Lombard.

[37] *IV Sent.*, 1, 2; *P.L.*, cxcii, 839.

[38] ii, 1.

the efficacy of the Sacraments, will give rise later on to many controversies of which we find still an echo in the problem of the physical or moral causality; however, it prevailed. Peter Lombard's teaching about the conception of the sacramental sign is also more precise than that of his predecessors. According to the Master of Sentences, the *sacramentum* is not the corporeal element alone: it is made up of the corporeal element and of the formula which accompanies the administration of the sacrament.

A sacrament, then, is at once a sign and a cause of grace; sign is the generic term of the definition, causality is its specific element. Thus the Augustinian formula received, in the 12th. century, its necessary complement.

* * *

The Lombardian definition met with various vicissitudes during the 13th. and 14th. centuries. St. Thomas and his school adopted it:

"Sacramenta novae legis simul sunt causae et signa; et inde est quod, sicut communiter dicitur, 'efficiunt quod figurant.' Ex quo etiam patet quod habent perfecte rationem sacramenti, in quantum ordinantur ad aliquid sacrum, non solum per modum signi, sed etiam per modum causae." [39]

It is because they are at the same time signs and causes of grace that the Sacraments of the New Law differ from those of the Old: the latter were mere signs.[40] But St. Thomas carefully remarks that, if

[39] *S. Theolog.*, p. 3, quaest. 62, art. 1, ad 1um. Elsewhere, *Opusc.* v, 14, St. Thomas repeats word for word Peter Lombard's definition.

[40] Art. 6.

the Christian Sacraments are causes of grace, they can be only instrumental causes thereof;[41] by this explanation, he made Peter Lombard's definition more acceptable.

On the other hand, the Franciscan school departed considerably from the conception of sacrament, as proposed by the Master of the Sentences and stated with precision by St. Thomas. According to its followers, a sacrament is chiefly a sign of grace; it is a cause of grace only in a broad sense. A mere condition " sine qua non " of grace, it has no other power than that of recalling to God His promise to bestow His grace on well disposed subjects. St. Bonaventure is quite ready to ascribe to the sacramental rites only this very attenuated causality:

" Sacramenta novae legis sunt causae gratiae, efficiunt et disponunt *extenso nomine:* an vero plus habeant, nec affirmo, nec nego." [42]

As for Duns Scotus, he does not hesitate to discard from the notion of a sacrament any idea of causality. In his view, a sacrament is an efficacious sign of grace, not because it has in itself a virtue that causes grace, but because, in virtue of a " covenant drawn up with the Church," God pledged Himself never to refuse His grace to those who receive the sacrament with the proper dispositions. A sacrament is efficacious, in consequence of that economy established by God, not in virtue of a causality intrinsic to the rite

[41] Art. 1. The divers systems proposed during the 13th. century to explain the causality of the Sacraments, will be treated in the 3rd. chapter.

[42] *In IV Sent. Dist.* I, q. 4.

itself. Such is the doctrine set forth in this definition of Duns Scotus:

"Signum sensibile gratiam Dei, vel effectum Dei gratuitum [for instance the sacramental character], ex institutione divina efficaciter significans, effectum ordinatum ad salutem hominis viatoris." [43]

The whole function of a sacrament, then, consists in signifying its effects efficaciously, in this sense that it is a sign of their production, which production is wrought infallibly by God in the soul, in virtue of His agreement, at the very moment when the rite is administered.

Hence, the Scotist conception of a sacrament differs somewhat from the Thomist conception: it attenuates considerably the efficacy of the sacramental rite.

Harnack,[44] who is manifestly anxious to find precursors for Protestants, affirms, not without exaggeration, that this "nominalist" conception paved the way for the doctrine of the Reformers and of Zwingli. However, the case is this: Duns Scotus and his school carefully maintained the objective efficacy of the Sacraments, independent of the subject's dispositions. No doubt, their teaching is less in harmony than that of the Thomists with the *Decretum ad Armenos* and the decisions of the Council of Trent; but it is very far from being opposed to them. At

[43] *In IV Sent. Dist.* 1, q. 2, no. 5. We leave aside, as being too subtle and without any interest, the disputes of the authors of the 14th. century as to whether or not a sacrament can be defined.

[44] *History of Dogma,* vol. 6, p.

all events, it differs essentially from that of the Reformers.

It would be as great an exaggeration to claim that the two philosophical currents of the Middle Ages, Realism and Nominalism, explain by themselves the rise of these two conceptions. For, to leave aside the consideration that the followers of the Scotist view, barring a few exceptions,[45] were not nominalists, the study of the texts proves that we must look for that rise chiefly in the effort made by the Christian mind to account for its sacramental faith. To explain the origin of doctrines by philosophical surroundings is indeed an easy process, but a process which, applied to the Catholic doctrine, exposes one to the risk of grasping but imperfectly the complex reality of history.

§ IV. *The definition of a Sacrament according to the Theologians subsequent to the Council of Trent.*

The Council of Trent formulated no definition of a sacrament. Our actual definition was drawn up according to the doctrine of the Council, by the theologians of the end of the 16th. century.[46] The following is the definition set forth by Suarez (1548–1617), a theologian who has been followed on this point by all modern authors.

[45] *v.g.*, William of Occam and Gabriel Biel in the 14th. century.

[46] The authors of the Catechism of the Council of Trent thus define a sacrament (pars ii, *De Sacramentis*, 9): Ut accuratius quid sacramentum sit declaretur, docendum erit rem esse sensibus objectam, quae ex Dei institutione sanctitatis et justitiæ tum significandæ, tum efficiendæ, vim habet.

Suarez first states a general, "univocal" definition of a sacrament, which may apply both to the Sacraments of the Old Law and to those of the New; then he exposes the differences which exist between the Sacraments of the two Laws; finally he shows how the two definitions, that of the Sacraments of the Old Law, and that of the Sacraments of the New, may be formulated.

The general definition of a sacrament is thus given:

"Sacramentum est signum sensibile, ad sanctitatem aliquam conferendam et veram animae sanctitatem significandam institutum." [47]

Two ideas constitute essentially this definition: the idea of sign, and the idea of a sign efficacious of a certain sanctity. Suarez leaves in the background the divine institution, which later on will be considered as the third idea essential to the definition.[48]

The theory of the sign exposed by Suarez is that of St. Augustine, plus the terminology and the subtleties of the School. Towards the end of the 16th. century, the theory of the Eucharist as a sacrifice had considerably developed under the pressure of the Protestant controversies; hence our author deems it useful to distinguish a sacrifice from a sacrament. They differ by their respective ends. A sacrament has for its purpose to sanctify men; a sacrifice aims at rendering to God the worship due to Him.

It is essential to a sacrament that it should impart a *certain* sanctity. Suarez employs this somewhat

[47] SUAREZ, *In 3am* P., qu. lx, art. 3, disp. 1, sect. 4.
[48] *Ibid.*, sect. i, 11.

vague expression, so as to include in his definition the Sacraments of the Old Law and those of the New. For there are two kinds of sanctity: the internal and spiritual sanctity, which the grace bestowed by the Sacraments of the New Law brings about, and the external and legal sanctity which consists in the legal purity imparted by the Sacraments of the Old:

"Alia est enim sanctificatio interior spiritualis, et coram Deo, quae fit per gratiam sanctificantem, et potest dici sanctificatio simpliciter; alia vero est sanctificatio externa legalis et secundum quid: qui modus sanctificationis erat frequens in veteri lege." [49]

Peter Lombard had already caught a glimpse of this doctrine.

Suarez states most clearly the differences which exist between the Sacraments of the two Laws. These are the chief differences.

From the viewpoint of the signified grace, there is this difference, that the Sacraments of the Old Law signified, while they figured, the true sanctity, that which Christ was to impart to His followers, whilst the Sacraments of the New Law signify and immediately confer sanctity. The Sacraments of old were then, truly signs of grace, "signs of Christ's passion, which is the source of all grace," "signs of the heavenly glory, which is the aim of our sanctification." This is why they are, and must be called Sacraments. Here we find St. Augustine's teaching enriched with the developments of St. Thomas.

But it is chiefly from the point of view of the production of sanctity that the fundamental difference is

[49] *Ibid.*, sect. ii.

manifest. The Sacraments of old imparted only a legal sanctity, except circumcision by which, according to the teaching of St. Augustine and of theologians, original sin was taken away. The Sacraments of the New Law alone confer the sanctifying grace which they signify.

Then Suarez points out the modifications that have to be introduced into the general definition so as to obtain the definitions peculiar to the Sacraments of the two Laws:

"Praedicta definitio facile potest ad sacramenta novae legis coarctari, addendo hujusmodi sacramentum significare veram animae sanctitatem, quam confert, seu quatenus ab ipso confertur. . . . Denique servata proportione, facile potest contrahi illa definitio ad sacramenta veteris legis, addendo fuisse instituta ad conferendum legalem sanctitatem, per quam vera sanctitas per Christum conferenda significabatur." [50]

The method and doctrine of Suarez were adopted later on by most authors; [51] no precision worthy of remark has been added thereto. The divine institution has been simply more insisted on in the definition.

As we have seen, the complete elaboration of the definition of a Sacrament was slowly worked out. The authors previous to St. Augustine drew from the study of Christian rites the idea of efficacious symbol. St. Augustine was the first that attempted to formulate a definition properly so called, and the authors of the 12th. century perfected the work.

[50] *Ibid.*, sect. iv.

[51] Franzelin, *De Sacramentis in genere*, II, i; Chr. Pesch, *Praelectiones dogmaticae*, Freiburg in Brisgau, 1900, t. vi, pp. 5 and ff.; Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis*, Rome, 1896, t. i, pp. 19 ff.; Tanquerey, *Synopsis theolog. dogmaticae*, Paris, 1903, t. ii, pp. 151–153.

CHAPTER II

THE COMPOSITION OF THE SACRAMENTAL RITES

A sacrament is an efficacious symbol of grace. Hence there are two distinct parts in a sacrament: one, the symbol, the sacramental rite, is external and visible; the other, the effect produced by the rite, is internal and unseen. The effects of the Sacraments, as well as their efficacy, will be studied in the third chapter. Here we will study the external and visible part of a sacrament, the sacramental rite. Is the sacramental rite something simple or composite? and if it is composite, what are its constitutive elements?

According to the *Decretum ad Armenos,*[1] the sacramental rite is made up of two essential elements: "res et verba." The element called "res" is that part of the sacramental rite, which is undetermined, as the ablution in Baptism, and the anointing in Confirmation and Extreme Unction. That the "res" may have a precise sacramental signification, it must be determined

[1] The *Decretum ad Armenos* is the official document of the Church, that treats of the binary composition of the sacramental rite. It was, as we know, added to the decrees of the Council of Florence; yet, it has not the value of a conciliary *definition.* It is "merely a practical instruction" intended for the United Armenians, and not for the whole Church. Hence, although that decree is worthy of great regard, still it does not impose itself on our faith. Cf. HURTER, *Theol. Dogm. comp.,* I, n. 441 — The *Decree to the Armenians* is a summary of a chapter of the *Opusculum* of St. Thomas, *De articulis fidei et sacramentis Ecclesiæ, Opusc.* v. c. 14, edit. Vivès, Paris, 1856.

by the other element, called "verba." The words which the minister utters when he performs the sacramental action, are then the determining element of the rite, the one that gives to the first all its meaning.

Because of the analogy which exists between that conception of the sacramental rite and the Aristotelian theory of matter and form, the *Decree to the Armenians,* ratifying the terminology of the School, calls *matter* and *form* the two constitutive elements of a sacrament:

"Omnia sacramenta tribus perficiuntur, videlicet rebus tanquam materia, verbis tanquam forma, et persona ministri conferentis sacramentum cum intentione faciendi quod facit Ecclesia: quorum si aliquod desit, non perficitur sacramentum." [2]

The Council of Trent has several times used this terminology,[3] but without giving an authoritative decision concerning the value of the philosophical theory from which it is derived.

The doctrine of the composition of the sacramental rite was settled by the theologians of the 12th. and of the 13th. century. St. Augustine began the work, especially as regards Baptism; Peter Lombard completed it; and the theologians of the 13th. century gave it its definitive form, by applying to the Sacraments the Aristotelian distinction of matter and form.

[2] DENZINGER, *Enchiridion,* n. 590 (new ed., n. 695).—The *Decree to the Armenians* does not speak of the determination of the matter and form of the Sacraments by Jesus Christ. Further on we expose the different opinions afterwards set forth by theologians on this subject.

[3] *Sess.* xiv, cap. 2, 3; can. 4.

§ I. *The Theory of a Sacramental Sign before St. Augustine.*

Here as elsewhere, the practice of the Church preceded by far theoretic speculation. Long before authors ever thought of analysing the sacramental rite, and of investigating the number of elements of which it is made up, the Church laid, by her sacramental life, the foundation of the speculations which were to come.

In the Apostolic period, the performance of the Christian rites comprised an action accompanied by a prayer. It is after praying that the Apostles laid their hands upon the seven Christians chosen to fulfil the office of deacons,[4] and that St. Peter and St. John laid their hands upon the Samaritans previously baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, to impart to them the Holy Ghost.[5] Before sending St. Paul and St. Barnabas as missionaries, the Prophets and the Doctors of the Church of Antioch imposed their hands upon them, after fasting and praying.[6]

The presbyters spoken of in the Epistle of St. James[7] prayed over the sick man, whilst anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. The invocation of the Trinity, or of the name of the Lord Jesus, likewise accompanied the baptismal ablution.[8] We learn from the authors of the 2d. and 3d. centuries[9]

[4] *Act.*, vi, 6.

[5] *Act.*, viii, 15, 17.

[6] *Act.*, xiii, 3. The texts which speak of the *anointing* conferred on Timothy by the imposition of hands, make no mention of prayer.—*I Tim.*, iv, 14; *II Tim.*, i, 6.

[7] v, 14.

[8] *Matth.*, xxviii, 19; *Didachè*, vii; *Act.*, ii, 38; viii, 16; xix, 5.

[9] St. Justin, I *Apol.*, 61; Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.*, 26; Origen, *In Rom.*, v. 8.

that they administered Baptism, calling upon the three Divine Persons, in keeping with Christ's command; for them there was no legitimate Baptism, unless it was conferred in the name of the Trinity. The consecration of bread and wine in the Eucharist is wrought, they tell us, by the words of Christ, that is to say, by the words of the institution, with or without the epiclesis.[10] The liturgical texts of the 4th. and 5th. centuries contain the formulas which the minister had to pronounce, when administering the various Sacraments.[11]

Such is the practice of the Church, on which authors will base their arguments, when the moment comes to frame the theory of the sacramental rite.

That moment could come only after the development of sacramental symbolism had brought out the distinction between the two parts of a sacrament: the visible part, the symbol, and the unseen part, the ef-

[10] St. Justin, *I Apol.*, 66; Origen, *Comment. in Matth.*, xi, 144; St. Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.*, iv, 18, 5; v. 2, 3.

[11] A Latin formula accompanying the anointing in Confirmation is found, about the 4th. century, in the *De Sacramentis*, ii, 24. Another formula is given by the *Canons of Hippolytus*, 133 (Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, 1904, p. 533). The actual Greek formula of Confirmation is found in a document of the 5th. century, known as the 7th. canon of the first Council of Constantinople (Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Edinburgh, vol. 2, p. 366). Formulas for the reconciliation of penitents are met with in the *Gelasian Sacramentary*, I, 38. (*P.L.*, lxxiv, 1095, seq.) In the *Canons of Hippolytus* we read the formulas that were pronounced at the ordinations of bishops, 9–19, of priests, 30–31, and of deacons, 39–42 (Duchesne, Ibid., 525–527). The *Apostolical Constitutions*, viii, 4 and ff., give the ancient formulas of Greek ordinations. The oldest liturgical texts that we possess mention then the formulas which always accompanied the sacramental action: unction, imposition of hands, etc. These formulas were not the same everywhere. Their diversity raised during the 17th. century problems of which we shall speak later on.

fect symbolized and produced. Not until that distinction was made, could anybody ever think of analysing theoretically the symbol, the rite, with the view to enumerate its constitutive elements. Now, as we saw in the preceding chapter, the conception of a sacrament as a symbol was worked out by the ecclesiastical writers of the middle of the 3rd. century, and by those of the 4th. Hence we may expect to find in that period the first outlines of a theory of the sacramental rite.

As a matter of fact, they are found, although in a very imperfect state. Their imperfections arise always from the fact that the Fathers are tempted to apply the same theory to Baptism and to the Eucharist, notwithstanding the essential differences to be found in these two Sacraments. It is the words of the Consecration that make bread and wine the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The elements necessary for the making of the Eucharist are, then, bread, wine, and the formula of consecration. This teaching concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist is assuredly quite correct; it is less so, when applied to Baptism.

Instead of saying, as we do now, that the *sacramentum* of Baptism consists in the ablution accompanied with the Trinitarian formula, the writers of whom we are speaking, reason from analogy with the Eucharist, and teach that it is constituted by the water and by the prayer of "sanctification" of the water.[12]

[12] Here it is question of the blessing of baptismal water, which was performed, during the Patristic period, immediately before the solemn administration of Baptism. Cf. DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship,* chap. ix, and *Dictionnaire de Théologie catholique,* art., "Baptême," II, col. 181. That blessing was a

The water "sanctified" for Baptism, is a sign of grace; it contains the power of the Holy Ghost. Its regenerating and sanctifying efficacy acts in the neophyte, when the latter is plunged into the water at the same time that the minister pronounces the Trinitarian formula. Thus, the "sanctification" of the water is considered an element of Baptism, almost as the prayer consecratory of bread and wine is considered an element of the Eucharist — due allowance being made. Let us bear well in mind however that the Fathers see analogies, but not a genuine identity, between the sanctification of baptismal water or of the oil for Confirmation on the one hand, and the Eucharistic consecration on the other. The latter makes Christ's Body and Blood present; the former imparts the divine power to the water and to the oil.

The theory which has just been exposed begins to show itself in the writings of Tertullian[13] and especially in those of St. Cyprian[14] as regards not only Baptism, but Confirmation also. That theory makes its influence felt also in the sacramental doctrine of St. Ambrose and of the author of *De Sacramentis*. Bread

most imposing ceremony. This explains why authors ascribed to it so great an importance, and looked upon it as a part of Baptism.

[13] *De bapt.*, 4: Omnes aquæ de pristina originis prærogativa sacramentum sanctificationis consequuntur, invocato Deo. Supervenit enim statim spiritus de cælis, et aquis superest, sanctificans eas de semetipso, et ita sanctificatæ vim sanctificandi combibunt.

[14] *Epist.* lxx, 1, 2: Quomodo autem mundare et sanctificare aquam potest qui ipse immundus est et apud quem Sanctus Spiritus non est? . . . Sanctificare autem non potuit olei creaturam qui nec altare habuit nec ecclesiam. Unde nec unctio spiritalis apud hæreticos potest esse, quando constet oleum sanctificari et eucharistiam fieri apud illos omnino non posse. Cf. *supra*, p. 17.

and wine become the sacrament of the Eucharist and are changed into Christ's Body and Blood by the consecration, viz.: by the words of the institution.[15] The "consecration" of the water is likewise necessary, in order that the Holy Ghost may dwell in it, and that it may have the power of purifying:

"Non omnis aqua sanat; sed aqua sanat, quae habet gratiam Christi. Aliud est elementum, aliud consecratio: aliud opus, aliud operatio. Aqua opus est, operatio Spiritus Sancti est. Non sanat aqua, nisi Spiritus descenderit, et aquam illam consecraverit."[16]

Thus, according to St. Ambrose, Baptism is made up of these elements: the water, the "consecration" of the water, and the invocation of the Trinity.

"Ideoque legisti quod tres testes in baptismate unum sunt, aqua, sanguis, et Spiritus (*1 Joan.*, V, 7); quia si unum horum detrahas, non stat baptismatis sacramentum. Quid est enim aqua sine cruce Christi?[17] Elementum commune, sine ullo sacramenti effectu. Nec iterum sine aqua, regenerationis mysterium est. . . . Sed nisi baptizatus fuerit [catechumenus] in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, remissionem non potest accipere peccatorum, nec spiritualis gratiae munus haurire."—*De Mysteriis*, 20.

Evidently, that lack of precision regarding the constituent elements of Baptism, comes from the fact that St. Ambrose and others are bent on applying to this sacrament the same theory as to the Eucharist.

[15] *De mysteriis*, 52; *De sacramentis*, iv, 14.

[16] *De sacramentis*, i, 15. Cf. *De mysteriis*, 14.

[17] Allusion to the sign of the cross made over the baptismal water for the purpose of blessing it. Cf. *De mysteriis*, 14; St. Augustine, *Sermo* ccclii, 3.

The same doctrine is also found among the Greeks. As our reader knows, they explain the efficacy of Baptism by the power of the Holy Spirit with which the baptismal water is endowed. For the blessing pronounced by the Bishop over the water draws down into it the divine power.[18] Hence the Greek Fathers insist on the necessity of that blessing, which they consider almost indispensable.[19]

The oil of Confirmation would have no efficacy, unless it was previously sanctified by the invocation of the Holy Spirit. "For," says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "just as the Eucharistic bread, after the invocation of the Holy Spirit is no longer ordinary bread, but the Body of Christ, so the chrism, after the invocation, is no longer an empty element, or if the expression be preferred, an ordinary element, but it is rather a gift of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, which the Deity present in it has rendered efficacious." [20]

We see that it is by reasoning from analogy with the Eucharist, that the Greek as well as the Latin divines, came to look upon the blessing of the water and of the oil, as a part of Baptism and of Confirmation.

[18] This idea is most distinctly expressed in the liturgical formulas of the blessing of the baptismal water, of the oil for Confirmation, and of the oil of the sick, in the *Euchologium of Serapio,* vii, xvi, xvii (G. Vobbermin, *Altchristliche liturgische Stücke,* pp. 8–9, 12–13), xix, xxv, xxix (ed. Funk); and in the formula of the blessing of the baptismal water in the *Apostolic Constitutions,* vii, 43, 5 (ed. Funk). The Latin formulas of the *Gelasian Sacramentary* (*P.L.,* lxxiv, 1110, 1111) are of a similar inspiration; they are still used to-day.

[19] St. Basil, *De Spiritu S.,* 66; St. Gregory of Nyssa, *In baptismum Christi; P.G.,* xlvi, 581; St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.,* iii, 3.

[20] *Mystag.,* iii, 3. Cf. St. Basil, *De Spiritu S.,* 66.

However, we should not think that the Fathers of that period considered the blessing of the baptismal water absolutely indispensable, for in the clinical Baptism,[21] administered in case of necessity, the water which was employed had not been blessed. As to the blessing of the oil for Confirmation and of the oil for Extreme Unction, it has always been regarded as necessary for these two Sacraments.

§ II. *The Augustinian Theory of the Sacramental Sign.*

In St. Augustine's writings, the theory of the composition of the sacramental sign becomes, as it were, conscious of itself and affirms itself in a precise analysis, particularly as regards Baptism.

The distinction so clearly drawn by the holy Doctor between the external and visible sign, the *sacramentum,* and the spiritual and unseen effect, which is produced, the *virtus sacramenti,* enabled him to consider the *sacramentum* in itself and to discern its constitutive elements. For Baptism, these elements are two in number: the first, called *elementum,* is the material object, water; the second is the word, *verbum.* The union of the *verbum* with the *elementum* makes up the sacrament;

"Quare non ait [Christus], mundi estis propter baptismum quo loti estis, sed ait, *propter verbum quod locutus sum vobis;* nisi quia et in aqua verbum mundat? Detrahe verbum, et quid est aqua nisi aqua? Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum, etiam ipsum tanquam visibile verbum."[22]

[21] The clinical Baptism is that which was administered to the sick who were confined to bed (κλίνη) and in danger of death.

[22] *In Joan., tract.* lxxx, 3.

Baptism, then, is composed of the ablution in water and of the word.[22a] The water derives from the word the power of cleansing the soul. It is because there is in the word a power which remains after that word has been uttered, that the water, "that moving element" has the power of cleansing man from his sin:

"Unde ista tanta virtus aquae, ut corpus tangat et cor abluat, nisi faciente verbo: non quia dicitur sed quia creditur? Nam et in ipso verbo aliud est sonus transiens, aliud virtus manens. . . . Mundatio igitur nequaquam fluxo et labili tribueretur elemento, nisi adderetur in verbo."[23]

It is rather difficult to know what is that word constitutive of a sacrament, of which St. Augustine speaks. Is it the formula of the blessing of the baptismal water? Or is it what we call now the form of Baptism — the invocation of the Trinity? Or does it embrace the formulas of exorcism, of renouncement of Satan, of profession of faith, etc., which made up the baptismal liturgy, and which St. Augustine calls "baptismatis forma"?[24]

Theologians, especially since Peter Lombard, see in

[22a] *In Joan., tract.* xv, 4: Quid est baptismus Christi? Lavacrum aquae in verbo. Tolle aquam, non est baptismus: tolle verbum, non est baptismus.

[23] *In Joan., tract.* lxxx, 3. In the last sentence, St. Augustine has in mind the text of the Epistle to the Ephesians, v, 26: Mundans eam [Ecclesiam] lavacro aquae in verbo. Cf. *Contr. Faustum,* xix, 16.

[24] *De Peccatorum meritis et remiss.,* lib. I, cap. xxxiv. Cf. Council of Milevis; can. 2. (DENZINGER, n. 65; new edit., n. 101.) Before St. Augustine, the author of *De Sacramentis,* i, 18, also calls "forma baptismatis" the ceremonies of a part of the baptismal ritual. TERTULLIAN, *De Bapt.,* 13, designates the Trinitarian formula of Baptism by the expression "forma præscripta tingendi." In the 12th. century these expressions will be adopted again, but their signification will be modified.

that word the sacramental formula of Baptism, viz.: the invocation of the Trinity which accompanies the ablution. They ground their assertion on this passage of the text:

"*Hoc est verbum fidei quod praedicamus:* quo sine dubio ut mundare possit, consecratur et baptismus."

Now the words by which Baptism is "consecrated," according to the teaching of St. Augustine himself,[25] are the words of the Gospel: "In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti."[26] Before the 13th. century, some authors thought that the *verbum* designates rather the formula of the blessing of the baptismal water, by which the water was "consecrated" in the name of Christ. This interpretation is quite ancient: it is found in an apocryphal sermon, placed among the works of St. Augustine.[27] It is also in harmony with the Augustinian theory of the sacrament, according to which the "consecration" of water by prayer and by the sign of the Cross makes the baptismal water efficacious:

"Sed quia baptismus id est salutis aqua non est salutis, nisi Christi nomine consecrata, qui pro nobis sanguinem fudit, cruce ipsius aqua signatur."[28]

[25] *De bapt. contr. Donat.,* iii, 20; vi, 47, etc. Cf. J. Maldonat, *Disputationes de Sacramentis,* Disputatio generalis, pars iii, Paris, 1677, pp. 9–10.

[26] *Matt.,* xxviii, 19.

[27] *Sermo ad Catechumenos,* 3: Ecce dilectissimi, venturi estis ad fontem aquae. . . . Debetis autem nosse cur virtus illius aquae et animae prosit et corpori. *Non enim omnis aqua mundat:* sanctificatur haec per consecrationem verbi. Tolle verbum, et quid est aqua nisi aqua? Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum (*P.L.,* xl, 694). This interpretation is reproduced in the 12th. century by the *Summa Sententiarum,* tr. v, cap. iv.

[28] St. Aug., *Sermo* ccclii, 3. Cf. *De bapt. contr. Donat.,* lib. v, 28; vi, 47.

We think that in St. Augustine's text, the *verbum* does not designate exclusively the Trinitarian formula which accompanies the ablution, but also the formula of the "consecration" of water.

Nay, it is most probable that the word *verbum* in the *Tractatus LXXX in Joannem,* has a bearing still more extensive, and that it designates sometimes the Trinitarian formula and the formula of the blessing of water, sometimes the "forma baptismatis," especially the profession of faith which the catechumen made before his Baptism, or which the sponsor made in the name of the child, sometimes too, the preaching of the Gospel, which, when received with faith, contributes to the Christian's spiritual cleansing.[29] Augustine's thought, so versatile, and at times so bewildering, passes without any transition from the sacramental words that are in the Gospel to the preaching of the words of the Gospel in general.

Thus we account for the fact that Calvin,[30] and after him most Protestants, based on that text their peculiar theory of the composition of the Sacraments. According to them, the constitutive words of the Sac-

[29] HURTER, *Theol. dogmat. Compendium,* tom. iii, n. 283.

[30] *Instit. Chrét.,* iv, 14: "A Sacrament consists of the word and of the external sign. . . . By the word we must not understand a meaningless murmur uttered after the manner of enchanters, as if the consecration could be wrought by that means; but we must understand the word which is repeated to us, to teach us and enable us to apprehend the meaning of the visible sign. . . . Now, we see that he (St. Augustine) demands for the sacraments some kind of preaching, from which faith follows as a consequence." Cf. BELLARMINE, *De Sacram. in genere.,* lib. i, cap. xix. Our entire chapter on the composition of the sacramental rite shows how great is the opposition of these Protestant divines to the constant practice of the Church.

raments are not "consecratory" words, objectively efficacious, but "preached" words, destined to arouse the faith of the subject, from which alone a sacrament draws some value. If, on account of its obscurity, the *Tractatus* can be alleged in behalf of that teaching, anyone who studies it in an unbiased spirit cannot fail to confess that such is not, however, the Augustinian conception of a sacrament. The formulas of the "consecration" of the material elements are efficacious by themselves, they act independently of the disposition of the minister and of the subject.[31]

According to St. Augustine, Baptism is, then, made up of water, of the formula of the "consecration" of the water, and of the invocation of the Trinity. The union of the water, the *elementum,* with the formulas, the *verbum,* constitutes the sacrament. This is St. Ambrose's doctrine, but more precise, and, as it were, more conscious of itself. Likewise the *sacramentum chrismatis* consists of the oil over which the blessing has been given.[32] The *sacramentum corporis et sanguinis Christi* is produced by the consecration of the bread and of the wine, which is wrought by the "mystical prayer," viz.: by the prayers of the Mass:

> Corpus Christi et sanguinem dicimus . . . illud tantum quod ex fructibus terrae acceptum et prece mystica con-

[31] *De bapt. contr. Donat.,* v, 28: Si ergo ad hoc valet quod dictum est in Evangelio, *Deus peccatorem non audit* (*Joan.,* ix, 31), ut per peccatorem Sacramenta non celebrentur; quomodo exaudit homicidam deprecantem, vel super aquam Baptismi, vel super oleum, vel super Eucharistiam, vel super capita eorum quibus manus imponitur? Quae omnia tamen et fiunt et valent etiam per homicidas, id est per eos qui oderunt fratres, etiam in ipsa intus Ecclesia.

[32] *Contr. litt. Petiliani,* ii, 239; *De bapt.,* v, 28. Cf. *Sermo* ccxxvii.

secratum rite sumimus ad salutem spiritualem in memoriam pro nobis dominicae passionis.[33]

The bread, the wine, and the formula of consecration are then the constitutive elements of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

St. Augustine sketches no system concerning the composition of the rite of Penance. This is to be accounted for, first of all, by the fact that the holy Doctor does not apply to Penance his theory of the *sacramentum;* he does not call it a sacrament. Then, as Father Vacandard remarks, the Doctors of the primitive Church, never thought of decomposing Penance into all its elements: "They were wont to consider Penance in the collection of the acts of which it was made up, in order to measure its full value. . . . That there might be full remission of sins committed after Baptism . . . all the exercises of the penitential discipline must have been accomplished, viz.: the confession of the fault, the absolution by the penitentiary priest or by the Bishop, the admission to penance, the satisfactory works, finally the reconciliation itself." [34] The Fathers ascribed the efficacy "to the whole collection of the penitential exercises"; they did not determine the value proper to each one of them. This is why we find in their writings all the elements of the sacrament of Penance, but no theory regarding the composition of this sacrament. That theory will be formulated by the mediæval divines.

[33] *De Trinitate,* iii, 10. Cf. P. Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie,* pp. 236 and ss.

[34] *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique,* art. "Absolution au temps des Pères," i, p. 160.

On the other hand, St. Augustine analyses Matrimony quite minutely. Christian marriage comprises three elements, which are also the three good things by which its excellence is proved: its end, which is the begetting of children; conjugal fidelity; and the indissoluble bond between the husband and the wife, which is the *sacramentum* of the union of Jesus Christ with His Church:

"Haec omnia bona sunt, propter quae nuptiae bonae sunt: proles, fides, sacramentum." [35]

St. Augustine calls the indissoluble bond *sacramentum,* because it is the figure, the symbol of the union of Jesus Christ with His Church. It is in order to secure that most holy symbolism, that Christian marriage has for its essential characters unity and indissolubility.[36] For St. Augustine the bond which unites the Christian husband and wife is the sacrament of Matrimony, just as the sacerdotal "character" is the sacrament of Holy Orders.[37] The famous distinction between the *sacramentum* and the *virtus sacramenti* is not clearly applied to Matrimony nor to Ordination. What the holy Doctor has directly in view is the effect of the matrimonial union and of the Ordination, the bond and the character; he does not think of framing the theory of the composition of the sacramental sign which constitutes these two Sacraments.

One of St. Augustine's contemporaries, Pope Innocent I, in his letter to Decentius,[38] Bishop of Eugu-

[35] *De bono conjug.,* 32.

[36] *De bono conjug.,* 21.

[37] The comparison is from St. Augustine, *De bono conjug.,* 32. The holy Doctor sometimes calls the sacrament of Order "jus dandi baptismum." *De bapt. cont. Donat.,* 1, 2.

[38] DENZINGER, *Enchiridion,* n. 61 (new ed., n. 99).

bium, in Umbria, calls the oil for the anointing of the sick, a "genus sacramenti"; but he does not speculate about the constitutive elements of that sacrament.

To sum up, the Augustinian theory of the composition of the Sacraments is really formulated only as regards the Eucharist and Baptism. It is most clearly expressed in connection with the latter sacrament; and it is this doctrine of St. Augustine concerning the constitutive elements of the baptismal rite, which will be retained. Mediæval divines will merely generalise it, by applying it, as well as may be, to the seven Sacraments.

§ III. *The Composition of the Sacraments during the 12th. century.— Peter Lombard.*

According to St. Augustine, a sacrament, then, consists in the union of the material element and of the word. In the following pages we shall see how the writers of the 12th. century state with precision that theory of the composition of the sacramental sign.

Before Peter Lombard, the famous text of St. Augustine: *Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum,* is interpreted in various ways. Hugh of St. Victor thinks that the *verbum* designates the Trinitarian formula which accompanies the ablution:

> "Per verbum enim elementum sanctificatur, ut virtutem sacramenti accipiat. Verbum autem quo elementum sanctificatur ut sit sacramentum, ipsum intelligimus de quo dictum est: *Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.*"

Baptism is essentially made up of water and of the

Trinitarian formula pronounced by the minister; water is the material element, the formula is called "forma verborum," an expression borrowed from St. Augustine.[39] As to the "consecration" of the baptismal font, it takes place, not because it is a constitutive part of Baptism, but, "that all may know that the sanctity of the Sacrament does not come from the minister, but from God the Sanctifier."[40]

However, after reaching a most exact doctrine of the composition of the baptismal rite, Hugh falls into confusion and inaccuracy when he attempts to formulate a general theory of all the Sacraments. He was led into error by his defective list of the Sacraments, and also by his mystical considerations.

For him, the matter of all the Sacraments consists either in physical substances, like the water of Baptism, the oil for the anointing, the bread and wine of the Eucharist, or in gestures, like the sign of the Cross, the raising of the hands for prayer, etc., or again in words, like the invocation of the Trinity, or similar prayers.[41] In keeping with the twofold element mentioned by St. Augustine, all the Sacraments are sanctified by the word of God; but that sanctifying word

[39] *De Sacram.*, lib. ii, pars vi, cap. ii. It must be remarked that Hugh also, as well as St. Augustine, makes use of the expression "forma Baptismi" to designate the entire baptismal rite. *Ibid.*, cap. vi, xiii, etc.

[40] *Ibid.*, cap. xi.

[41] *De Sacram.*, lib. I, pars ix, cap. vi: In triplici materia omnia divina sacramenta conficiuntur, scilicet aut in rebus, aut in factis, aut in verbis. . . . In rebus conficiuntur sacramenta, sicut videlicet sacramentum baptismi in aqua. . . . In factis etiam sacramenta inveniuntur, quemadmodum videlicet cum signum crucis . . . facimus. . . . In dictis sacramentum invenitur quemadmodum est invocatio Trinitatis, et cætera hujusmodi.

may be either pronounced orally, when the sacrament consists in a physical substance that has to be sanctified, or simply internally believed, when the sacrament consists in a mere gesture, showing faith in the word of God.[42]

Far more simple is the teaching of the *Summa Sententiarum*. Two parts constitute Baptism essentially: the *sacramentum baptismi,* and the *forma baptismi.* The *sacramentum* consists in the water "sanctified" by the formula of blessing: for, according to the *Sermo ad Catechumenos,* the element united with the word of sanctification makes up the Sacrament. As to the *forma,* it was given by Christ, it is the invocation of the Trinity, which accompanies the immersion.[43] Led astray by the apocryphal Sermon ascribed to St. Augustine, the *Summa* wrongly inserts in the constitution of the *sacramentum* of Baptism, the formula of the blessing of the water instead of the *forma baptismi.* On this point Peter Lombard will depart from the *Summa,* and side with Hugh. On the other hand, the words of the consecration of bread and wine are most rightly considered the *forma sacramenti eucharistiæ.*[44]

* * *

Peter Lombard accepted Hugh's interpretation of the text of the *Tractatus LXXX in Joannem,* and he

[42] *Ibid.,* lib. ii, pars ix, cap. i: Quaedam sacramenta sine prolatione verborum per solam fidem sanctificantur.— St. Bonaventure, *In IV Sent.,* Dist. xxiii, art. i, q. iv, speaks of the queer opinion of certain authors according to whom a mental prayer would suffice for Extreme Unction, which would thus be a sacrament without form.

[43] *Sum. Sent.,* tract. v, cap. iii, iv.

[44] Tract. vi, cap. iv.

formulated a general theory of the sacramental rite, which he applied to all the Sacraments, except Penance and Matrimony:

"Duo autem sunt in quibus sacramentum consistit, scilicet verba et res; verba, ut invocatio Trinitatis; res, ut aqua, oleum et hujusmodi." [45]

The special character indeed of the work of the Master of Sentences is the general application he made to all the Sacraments, of the Augustinian theory: both of the distinction between the *sacramentum* and the *virtus sacramenti,* and of the composition of the *sacramentum.*[46]

The sacrament of Baptism consists in the bodily ablution accompanied with the Trinitarian formula:

"In duobus ergo consistit sacramentum baptismi, scilicet, in verbo et elemento. . . . Sed quod est illud verbum, quo accedente ad elementum, fit sacramentum? Veritas te docet. . . . *Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris.* . . ."

The effect of that sacrament, its *res,* is the justification of the soul.[47]

The words said by the Bishop when marking with the sign of the Cross the foreheads of the baptized, and that unction itself make up the sacrament of Confirmation, the *virtus* of which is the conferring

[45] *Sent.,* IV, Dist. I, 4.

[46] Peter Lombard draws chiefly from Gratian the texts of the Fathers by which he justifies his sacramentary teaching. Cf. TURMEL, *Histoire de la Théologie positive,* livre II, deuxième partie, chap. vii and ff.; J. ANNAT, *Pierre Lombard et ses sources patristiques,* in the *Bulletin de Littérature ecclésiastique,* March, 1906, pp. 84 ff.

[47] Dist. III, 1, 2, 12.

of the Holy Ghost for the purpose of imparting strength to the soul (Dist. VII, 1); a doctrine that draws its inspiration from the *Sum. Sent.*, tract. VI.

In the Eucharist, the species of bread and wine are *the sacramentum,* and the words of the consecration are the *forma.* Peter Lombard's teaching about the *res* of the Eucharist is that of the *Summa Sententiarum,* and of the other writings of the first half of the 12th. century:

"Hujus autem sacramenti gemina est res: una, scilicet, contenta et non significata; altera significata et non contenta. Res contenta et significata est caro Christi, quam de Virgine traxit, et sanguis quem pro nobis fudit. Res autem significata et non contenta est unitas Ecclesiae. . . . Haec est duplex, caro Christi et sanguis."

Hence we may distinguish in the Eucharist the *sacramentum tantum,* viz.: the species of bread and wine; the *sacramentum et res,* viz.: the natural Body and Blood of Christ; the *res et non sacramentum,* viz.: His mystical Body,[48] a well known distinction which theologians will endeavor later on to apply to all the Sacraments, and which will entangle them in many subtleties.

Peter Lombard did not apply his theory to Penance, and really he could not have done so, owing to the confusion which reigned among the divines of the 12th. century concerning this sacrament. They did not distinguish clearly enough the sacrament of Penance from the virtue of penance; hence they taught that

[48] Dist. VIII. The just alone receive the two *res* of the Eucharist; those that are unworthy receive only the natural body of Jesus Christ, since they are unable to possess the grace of union with Christ and with His Church. Dist. IX.

perfect contrition is necessary for the remission of sins, and that the chief effect of the priest's absolution is, as Peter Lombard teaches after St. Anselm, to declare that the sins have been forgiven by God.[49] Absolution, then, would not be a constitutive element of the sacrament of Penance. This is why Peter Lombard does not look, in the *sacramentum* of Penance, for the two elements *res et verba.*

As regards the distinction between the *sacramentum* and the *res vel virtus sacramenti,* Peter Lombard has no definite opinion concerning the way in which it applies to Penance. He merely exposes the views of his contemporaries, without adopting any of them. According to some, the *sacramentum* consists in the exterior penance, that is to say, in the penitent's confession and satisfaction; the *res sacramenti* is the interior penance, that is to say, the contrition of the heart, which brings about the remission of sins. Others distinguished, not without much subtlety, in Penance as in the Eucharist, the *sacramentum tantum,* viz.: the exterior penance, the *sacramentum et res,* viz.: the interior penance, and the *res et non sacramentum,* the remission of sins.[50] It is only about the time of St. Thomas that a more accurate conception of the sacrament of Penance will enable theologians to find out its constitutive elements.

The *sacramentum* of Extreme Unction is the unction made on the sick with the oil blessed by the Bishop; its effect is the remission of the sins, together with the increase of the strength of the sick person.[51]

[49] A. VACANT, *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique,* art. "Absolution," I, 172 and ff.

[50] Dist. XXII, 3.

[51] Dist. XXIII, 2.

The ceremonies of Ordination for the various Orders are *sacramenta* which confer powers and impart grace.[52]

The union of the minds and of the bodies of husband and wife, expressed externally by the mutual consent, is the *sacramentum* of Marriage, viz.: the sacred symbol of Christ's union with His Church.[53] The Sacrament of Marriage makes the matrimonial bond indissoluble. At the risk of opposing his own definition of a sacrament, Peter Lombard teaches, like several of his predecessors,[54] that this sacrament was instituted, not precisely to produce grace, but to be, after the fall, a remedy to concupiscence.[55]

Peter Lombard's systematisation is to become classic, except as regards Penance and Matrimony. Henceforth the sacramental rite, that which constitutes the *sacramentum,* will be looked upon as a moral whole, formed by the union of two essential elements, *res et verba.* Sacramentary Theology is formed.

§ IV. *The Conception of Matter and Form of a Sacrament in the 13th. Century.*

It is during the 13th. century that Aristotelian Philosophy definitely penetrated into Theology. Was it not, as it has been remarked, very clever tactics, in the struggle against Averroism which attacked Christianity by means of Aristotle, to take hold of Peripateticism and to use it as an arm to defend Catholic dogma? The attempt proved successful in the hands

[52] Dist. XXIV, 10.
[53] Dist. XXVI, 6.
[54] Hugh of St. Victor especially, *De Sacram.,* lib. II, pars xi, cap. iii, and the Abelardian *Epitome,* 31; *P.L.,* clxxviii, 1745.
[55] Dist. XXVI, 2. Cf. Dist. II, 1.

of St. Thomas, and it attained the results which we know.

Several complete theories were borrowed from Aristotelian Philosophy, that they might be used for the exposition of theological doctrines. Foremost among these theories, we must place that of matter and form, which served to impart more precision to the doctrine of the composition of the sacramental rite. In truth, the analogies between Aristotle's theory of matter and form, and the composition of the Sacraments, are so striking that sooner or later they were sure to be put to account. Like a physical body, a sacrament is a compound resulting from the union of two constitutive elements, one of which is undetermined and corresponds to matter, the other is determining and corresponds to form. William of Auxerre[56] (†1223) was the first who pointed out these analogies, and outlined the theory of matter and form of a sacrament: a theory which we find perfectly completed in the writings of St. Thomas.

At the outset, the Angelic Doctor justifies the theory of the sacramental rite, set forth by Peter Lombard: "It is quite fitting," he says, "to join, in the Sacraments, words to external things:" for, in this way, the Sacraments are in harmony with the Incarnate Word, the cause of sanctification; they are made up of a word

[56] P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den heiligen Sacramenten,* Freiburg im B., 1893, p. 103. Yet it is quite probable that the use of the words *materia* and *forma* to designate the sacramental action and the words with which it is accompanied, was suggested to William by the terminology of the authors of the 12th. century rather than by the Aristotelian theory of matter and form. But soon after Alexander of Hales, *Sum. Theol.,* iv p., qu 5, memb. 3, art. I, and all his contemporaries applied to a sacrament the genuine conception of matter and form.

united with an external thing, just as the Word, in the mystery of the Incarnation, became united with a visible body. They are also in keeping with human nature which they are intended to heal: by means of the external thing, they touch the body, and by the word, they inspire the soul with faith in the sacramental remedy.[57] A sacrament, then, consists in the union of the sensible thing and of the word, just as the physical compound results from the union of matter and form:

"Ex verbis et rebus fit quodam modo unum in sacramentis, sicut forma et materia, in quantum scilicet per verba perficitur significatio rerum."[58]

Then St. Thomas subordinates his sacramentary theology to that philosophical conception of a sacrament. Determined words, united with determined external things, are essential to a sacrament; for, "in all the compounds of matter and form, the determining principle is the form, which is in some way the end and term of matter. Since then, in the Sacraments, determined external things which are, as it were, their matter, are required; with still more reason is a form of determined words necessary."[59] The unchanging character of sacramental words is also deduced from the function they fulfil in the Sacraments. The Philosopher has said that every addition or subtraction changes the species in forms, as in numbers; consequently, if the change introduced into the form modifies the requisite meaning of the words, there is no sacrament.[60]

[57] *S. Theol.*, 3ª p., quaest. 60, art. 6.
[58] *Ibid.*, ad 2um.
[59] Quæst. 60, art. 7.
[60] Art. 8.

Henceforth, the theology of the composition of the sacramental rite shall rest on that conception of a sacrament, the rise of which we have just witnessed. Authors will be inclined to set aside the study of history; and by means of *a priori* reasonings, will attempt to determine the conditions on which Sacraments are valid, and the essential elements of each one of them.

Duns Scotus[61] added a last determination to the theory, by distinguishing two kinds of matter: the remote matter, which is the material element considered in itself — for instance, baptismal water — and the proximate matter, which is the application of the remote matter to the subject, when the sacrament is administered, like the baptismal ablution. St. Thomas applied the name of matter exclusively to the water of Baptism, to the holy chrism, etc.,[62] and continued to call "res" the external acts, such as ablutions, anointing, etc.:

"Sub rebus autem comprehenduntur etiam ipsi actus sensibiles, puta ablutio, inunctio et alia hujusmodi."[63]

[61] Duns Scotus, *IV Sent.*, Dist. III, quæst. III; Dist. VII, quæst. I: Hic patet, quae sit hujus sacramenti [confirmationis] materia: quia cum posset distingui de materia, sicut distinctum est de materia in Baptismo (Dist. III, q. 3). Materia proxima . . . est unctio facta in fronte in figura crucis, cum chrismate sanctificato. Materia autem remota, est chrisma compositum ex oleo olivæ et balsamo, et sanctificatum specialiter ab episcopo vel ab alio, cui talis sanctificatio poterit committi.

[62] *Opusc.* V, 14: Verba quibus sanctificantur sacramenta, dicuntur sacramentorum formæ: res autem significatæ dicuntur sacramentorum materiæ, sicut aqua est materia baptismi, et chrisma confirmationis.

[63] 3 p., quæst. 60, art. 6. The distinction between the *materia remota* and the *materia proxima* is made, in the *Summa,* only in the case of Penance. Qu. 84, art. 2.

But what it is important to observe, are the remarkably accurate explanations contributed by St. Thomas to the composition of the sacrament of Penance. In his time, the distinction between contrition and attrition had brought out most explicitly the great difference between the virtue of penance and the sacrament of Penance, which obtains all its efficacy from the priest's absolution.[64] Hence the sacrament of Penance does not consist, as Peter Lombard said, in the external acts of the penitent: these are only a part of the sacrament, its matter; the priest's absolution is its form.

"In hoc sacramento [Paenitentiae] sunt aliquae res, scilicet, ipsi exteriores actus, et aliqua verba, scilicet, sacerdotis absolventis, quae sunt forma hujus sacramenti, quibus exprimitur absolutionis actus."[65]

For Penance and Matrimony differ from the other Sacraments: in the latter, the matter and the form exist independently of the acts of the subject; in the former, on the contrary, the very acts of the subject are their constitutive elements:

"In illis autem sacramentis, quae actum nostrum requirunt . . . ipsi actus exterius apparentes hoc idem faciunt, quod materia in aliis sacramentis."[66]

[64] A. VACANT, *l. c.*

[65] ST. THOMAS, *In Sent. IV,* Dist. XIV, Quæst. I, ad 2um. *Sum. Theol.,* 84, art. 2, 3.

[66] *Ibid.,* ad 1um. *S. Theol.,* 84, art. 2: Proxima sacramenti paenitentiae materia sunt actus paenitentis; remota vero sunt peccata non acceptanda, sed detestanda et destruenda. Art. 3: In qualibet re perfectio attribuitur formae. Dictum est autem supra (art. 1), quod hoc sacramentum perficitur per ea quae sunt ex parte sacerdotis. Unde oportet quod ea quae sunt ex parte paeni-

This view Duns Scotus did not accept. For him, the priest's absolution constitutes by itself the whole sacrament; the acts of the penitent are not its constitutive parts, they are mere conditions. Yet, let it be observed, what Duns Scotus rejects is not the conception of matter and form applied to Penance, but simply the particular way in which St. Thomas had applied it to that sacrament. For, in his time, that conception was definitively accepted, and no scholar ever thought of opposing it.

However, as our readers easily imagine, the theory of matter and form of a sacrament would not have been held as true by mediæval authors, if it could not have been applied to all the Sacraments.[67]

Since the principle that a sacrament consists of matter and form was laid down, these two elements had to be found in all the Sacraments. How could a rite which is not made up of matter and form, and therefore not in keeping with the ideal type, how could such a rite be a genuine sacrament? Therefore even Marriage, although it is a contract, was likened to a physical compound. Truly, the task was not easy; nay it may be impossible, if we judge from the many attempts made by Theologians from St. Thomas down to our own day. At all events, the attempt *was* actually made. In his *Commentary on the Sentences,* the Angelic Doctor asks himself how Matrimony can be

tentis, sive sint verba, sive facta, sint quaedam materia hujus sacramenti; ea vero quae sunt ex parte sacerdotis, se habeant per modum formae.

[67] It must be remarked, however, that many theologians subsequent to St. Thomas, refused to admit that *all* the Sacraments were composed of matter and form. Durand of Saint-Pourçain, in the 14th. century, is of this number. *In IV Sent.,* Dist. I, qu. 3. But their opinion was never popular in the schools.

a sacrament, since apparently, at least, neither form, nor matter is found in it; the priest's blessing is not essential, and, on the other hand, no material element is required. The form of this sacrament, he answers, consists in the words which express the consent of the husband and of the wife; the consent itself holds the place of matter:[68] a puzzling explanation which will bring into play the sagacity of the commentators of St. Thomas!

§ V. *The Conception of Matter and Form, after the 13th. Century.*

We have just witnessed the formation of the concept of matter and form of a sacrament, and endeavored to discern the moment when the *a priori* entered the field of sacramentary theology. We have still to study the consequences of that theological movement, so as to be able to form an accurate idea of all its bearing.

As soon as a sacrament came to be looked upon as a compound resulting from the union of the two constitutive elements, the conditions of a valid administration of the Sacraments were set forth with a precision and a rigor unknown up to that time. The theory of matter and form enabled moralists to expose, with great distinctness, the way in which the minister

[68] *In Sent.* IV, Dist. 26, qu. 2: Verba quibus consensus matrimonialis exprimitur, sunt forma hujus sacramenti: non autem benedictio sacerdotis quae est quoddam sacramentale. . . . Sacramentum matrimonii perficitur per actum ejus qui sacramento illo utitur, sicut paenitentia; et ideo sicut paenitentia non habet aliam materiam nisi ipsos actus sensui subjectos, qui sunt loco materialis elementi, ita est de matrimonio. Cf. *Summa* 42, art. 1.

must perform the sacramental action and pronounce the sacred formulas. In this regard and in many others too, the conception of matter and form was of great benefit, and denotes considerable progress.

Another consequence of the sacramental theory of matter and form seems to have been the substitution or the addition of some new formulas to the old ones, which were not found expressive enough to fulfil the function of forms. Some deprecative forms, used before the 13th. century, were set aside and replaced by indicative forms, except for Extreme Unction, because of the text of St. James: *Et oratio fidei salvabit infirmum.*[69]

The formula: *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum,* etc., which accompanies the imposition of the Bishop's hand in the ordination to Deaconship was introduced into the rituals, about the 13th. or the 14th. century, probably because no form expressive enough was found in the long prayer which alone, up to that time, had been used.[70] The same remark must be made about the

[69] The indicative form of Penance: *Ego te absolvo,* became general after St. Thomas. (A. VACANT, *Dictionnaire de théologie,* i, 244 and ss.) That of Confirmation was commonly adopted about the same time. (CHARDON, *Histoire de la Confirmation,* chap. I; SCHANZ, *Die Lehre von den heil. Sacr.,* p. 304.) With J. Morin and several other theologians we think that the Church received from Christ the power to determine the matter and form of some Sacraments, and, therefore, to modify them. The modification, in the 13th. century, was brought about in part through the influence of the theory of matter and form of the sacrament, as we learn from the arguments set forth by St. Thomas. *S. Theol.,* quæst. 72, 4: Prædicta forma [Consigno te . . .] est conveniens huic sacramento [confirmationis]. Sicut enim forma rei naturalis dat ei speciem, ita forma sacramenti continere debet quidquid pertinet ad speciem sacramenti. Cf. quæst. 84, 3.

[70] J. MORIN, *De sacris Ecclesiæ ordinationibus,* part III, exerc.

similar formula: *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum,* now employed, in the Latin Church, for the consecration of bishops.[71]

However, in order not to overestimate the influence of the theory of matter and form in the modification of the sacramental rites, it must be observed that the *traditio instrumentorum* in the ordination of priests, and that of the Gospels in the ordination of deacons, as well as the episcopal and priestly unctions, existed long before the 13th. century. These ceremonies were introduced under the influence of tendencies similar to those which prompted the scholastic theologians.[72]

The conception of matter and form applied to the Sacraments had other consequences, and these of a rather serious character.

To it we must ascribe, in a large measure, the origin of Melchior Cano's [73] opinion concerning Matrimony. The difficulty of finding, in the matrimonial contract, the matter and form of the sacrament had caused theologians to lapse into subtleties at which Cano laughs:

"Hic tibi dicit contrahentes ipsos esse materiam sacramenti; hic, non ipsos, sed consensum; alius, gestus et nutus, qui a viro feminaque exceptis verbis adhibentur; alius, prioris loquentis verba materiam esse affirmant, posterioris formam. . . . Quorsum autem attinet, in re gravissima tenuiter, ne dicam ridicule, philosophari?"

9, c. ii; CHARDON, *Histoire des Sacrements.* L'Ordre, II, part III, chap. v; MANY, *Praelectiones de Sacra Ordinatione,* Paris, 1905, p. 450.

[71] MORIN, *Ibid.,* part III, exerc. 2.— CHARDON, *L'Ordre,* II p., chap. i.

[72] See the periods in which these different ceremonies were adopted, in CHARDON, H. de l'Ordre, II, p., chap. i-v, who borrows from Morin; and in MANY, *l.c.,* pp. 433–462.

[73] *De locis theol.,* lib. VIII, cap. v.

The best thing to do might be, it seems, simply to seek no longer for a matter and a form in Matrimony. Melchior Cano does not think so:[74]

"Incredibile est autem nisi a forma sacra sacramentum perfici. Quemadmodum enim humana forma hominem efficit, et albedo facit album, ita prorsus necesse est a forma sacra quodcumque sacramentum existere."

Hence, he is obliged to look for that "indispensable" form in the words the priest pronounces, whilst he blesses the couple. Thus the matrimonial contract is distinguished from the sacrament, of which it is the matter; the Christian marriage may exist, as a contract, yet may not be a sacrament. It becomes a sacrament, when it is united with the form, which is supplied by the priest.[75]

This erroneous doctrine, of which we have exposed the origin, was followed by a whole school until the middle of the last century, and hindered for a long while the development of the theology of Marriage.

However, the most serious consequences of the theory of matter and form, applied to the Sacraments, refer to their institution. Matter and form being the

[74] Melchior Cano was held back, not only by his ideas concerning the Sacraments, but also by the *Decree to the Armenians*. But the *Decree* does not apply to Marriage the theory of matter and form; which proves that that theory must not be necessarily extended to all the Sacraments. We need not say that the Church never approved those abuses of the sacramental theory of matter and form, for which individual authors alone remain responsible.

[75] Pallavicini, *Histoire du Concile de Trente*, livre XXIII^e, chap. ix, n. 16, informs us that Protestants did not fail to say that the words: *Ego vos in matrimonium conjungo*, etc., of which the Council speaks (Sess. XXIV, *De Reform. Matrim.*, cap. I) were invented to be made the form of the sacrament of Matrimony.

essential elements of a sacrament, theologians were led to believe that to institute a sacrament was exactly the same as to determine its matter and form. And yet, we may easily imagine a distinction between the institution of the Sacraments and the determination of their respective matter and form.[76] But when one reasons as if he identified the composition of the Sacraments with that of physical bodies, he is also tempted to admit that, like a physical body, a sacrament cannot exist unless God Himself determines its constitutive elements, which must remain unchanged. Hence it is God and God alone, who chose the matter and form of the Sacraments, as they were in the 13th. century, and if God chose them, they must have been the same in all places and at all times.

This doctrine had scarcely arisen when it found itself in conflict with history, and led some theologians, like Alexander of Hales, to the most unlikely hypotheses. In order to secure the divine institution of the actual matter and form of Confirmation, Alexander went so far as to ascribe the origin of this sacrament to a council held at Meaux, in the 9th. century, which was prompted by the Holy Ghost to determine the elements of the sacramental rite:

"Postquam apostoli qui erant bases Ecclesiae, qui a Domino erant praelati et Spiritu Sancto confirmati, defecerunt, institutum fuit hoc sacramentum Spiritus Sancti instinctu in concilio Meldensi *quantum ad formam verborum et materiam elementorum,* cui etiam Spiritus Sanctus contulit virtutem sanctificandi."[77]

[76] Since the 17th. century, that distinction has actually been made, as we will see later on. When instituting the Sacraments, Christ may have left to His Church the power of determining the matter and form of some of them.

[77] *Sum, Theol.,* IV, qu. 9, membr. 1.

Before this Council, the Holy Ghost was imparted to the faithful without the sacramental rite, since the actual form: *Signo te . . .* was not yet in existence.[78] This was simply to give up the institution of Confirmation by Christ, out of regard for the claims of history. Albert the Great and St. Thomas did the reverse. Contrary to history, they maintained that Christ Himself determined the present matter and form of the sacrament of Confirmation, and that, since the Apostles, these have always been in use in the Church. St. Bonaventure continued to teach, like Alexander of Hales, that the choice of chrism and of the actual formula of Confirmation was inspired by the Holy Spirit to the Church. But, instead of dating this fact from the 9th. century, the Seraphic Doctor placed it immediately after the death of the Apostles. Before that time, the Apostles imparted the Holy Ghost, without the sacrament of Confirmation, which was instituted only after their death, since it is only after their death that its matter and form were "instituted." [79]

Decidedly, the attempts of Alexander and of St. Bonaventure could not meet with success. However, as the solution of the conflict could not be sought at that time in the modification of theological hypotheses, it had to be found in the ignoring of history. This was done by the authors of the 14th., 15th. and 16th. centuries; hence the conflict no longer existed during

[78] See in TURMEL, *Histoire de la théologie positive*, liv. II, 1re partie, chap. ix, the discussions concerning Confirmation: discussions that arose from the identification, made by the authors of the 13th. century, of the institution of a sacrament with the determination of its matter and form.

[79] *In Sent.* IV, dist. VII, art. I, q. 1, 2.

that age, the golden age of the conception of matter and form applied to the Sacraments.[80]

This calm was disturbed by the Catholic works which arose on occasion of the Protestant controversies of the 17th. century. In order to convince Protestants of the apostolic origin of the sacramental dogmas, Catholic scholars took up historical researches regarding our sacred rites, both in the Greek and in the Latin Church. First the Greek Arcudius published in 1619 his work "*De concordia Ecclesiae occidentalis et orientalis in septem sacramentorum administratione.*" In 1651 and 1655, John Morin, of the Oratory, published his two immortal treatises *Commentarius historicus de disciplina in administratione sacramenti Paenitentiæ,* and *Commentarius de sacris Ecclesiae Ordinationibus.* At the beginning of the 17th. century, Dom Martène[81] and Eusebius Renaudot[82] composed works

[80] Suarez (1548–1617) at the end of the 16th. century thus exposes his teaching on the composition of the Sacraments: 1° Dico . . . materias et formas sacramentorum determinatas esse ex Christi Domini institutione, et eo modo quo definitæ sunt, esse necessarias ad sacramenta conficienda. . . . In quibusdam [sacramentis] certum est materiam esse determinatam in quadam specie ultima ut est aqua in Baptismo et oleum in extrema unctione, in aliis vero sufficit unitas generica, ut verbi gratia confessio dolorosa est materia sacramenti paenitentiae, sive sit dolorosa per attritionem, sive per contritionem, quae specie differunt (Quæst. 70, art. 8, disp. 2, sect. 3.)—2° Dicendum . . . est sacramenta *omnia* eadem materia et forma constare in universa Ecclesia, atque ideo id quod in uno loco sufficit, sufficere ubique ut sacramentum factum teneat, quamvis fortasse peccet minister accidentalem ritum omittendo . . . alioquin . . . dici posset diversis temporibus posse variari sacramentorum essentias, ita ut quod nunc sufficit, antea non fuerit sufficiens: vel e contrario, quia non est major ratio de diversis locis, quam de diversis temporibus.

[81] Especially in his *De antiquis Ecclesiæ ritibus* (Rouen, 1700).

[82] *Liturgiarum orientalium collectio* (Paris, 1716); *La per-*

which equalled in every respect those of their predecessors. A few years later, Dom Chardon brought to the knowledge of the public at large, the information which for more than a century Catholic historians had gradually accumulated.[83]

The results of those truly scholarly works fully vindicated, as we might expect, the definitions of the Council of Trent. They showed that the sacramental faith of the Church had been substantially the same at all times, and thus they dealt a decisive blow to Protestant doctrines.

However, whilst the conclusions reached by historians were in harmony with the definitions of the Church, they were far less favorable to the theory of matter and form of the Sacraments. History showed, not only, as Alexander of Hales had already remarked, that Christ had not instituted the actual matter and form of all the Sacraments, but also that the matter and form of some of them had varied in the course of ages, nay, that the matter and form of some were not the same among the Greeks and among the Latins. Thus historical facts were found to clash with the theories of the schools concerning the constitutive elements of the sacramental rites.[84]

pétuité de la foi de l'Eglise touchant l'Eucharistie, les Sacrements (1711–1713).

[83] *Histoire des Sacrements.* We do not aim at enumerating all the historical works then published that treat of the Sacraments. Yet we must mention the work of Goar, *Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum* (Paris, 1647), and the name of Joseph-Simon Assemani (+ 1768).

[84] The following are the historical facts which were at variance with the theories of the Schools. In the Apostolic Age, the matter of Confirmation was the imposition of hands; after the 2d. century, it was, besides, the anointing with the holy chrism. The present Latin form of Confirmation became generally ac-

But this is not of a nature to disturb any one, since the Church has never defined that Christ Himself determined the matter and form of all the Sacraments.

However, theologians were considerably perplexed: a perplexity to which the historians we have just mentioned, especially Dom Chardon, frequently allude, not without a tinge of irony.

In the preface of his work *De sacris Ecclesiae Ordinationibus,* John Morin relates that having gone to Rome in 1639, at the invitation of Cardinal Francis Barberini, a nephew of Pope Urban VIII, he was invited to examine the Euchologium of the Greeks in an assembly of theologians. The latter were taking up the study of the Greek ordinations, and they had agreed to follow one canon of criticism, viz., they would accept those Eastern practices that agreed with their own principles, but they would seriously question and even reject the others.[85] Morin had no diffi-

cepted in the West only about the 12th. century; before that time, the most diverse formulas were used in the Churches. Since the 4th. century, the Greek form is Σφραγὶς δωρεᾶς Πνεύματος Ἁγίου. Before the 13th. century, the formulas of the absolution of sins were generally deprecative, as they are still in many Greek Churches. (*Dictionnaire de théolog. cath.,* i, 200 and ff.) The same diversity exists as regards the ancient formulas of Extreme Unction. (MARTÈNE, *De antiquis Eccl. ritibus,* lib. I, p. II, cap. vii.) The matter of Order was, and is still, among the Greeks the imposition of hands alone. In the Latin Church, since the early Middle Ages, it consists in the imposition of hands and in the *traditio instrumentorum.*— DOM PUNIET has demonstrated in the *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de Liturgie,* art. *"Baptême,"* fascic. xiii, col. 336 ff., that the Trinitarian profession of faith in the form of questions and answers, which accompanied the triple immersion, served formerly as the baptismal formula.

[85] J. MORIN, *Commentarius de sacris Ecclesiæ ordinationibus* (Paris, 1655), Præfatio, p. 1: Mihi non satis tutum videbatur ex solis Doctorum scholasticorum dictatis de re tanti momenti

culty in convincing them that the Eastern practices regarding ordinations had been those of the Latin Church before the Middle Ages, and that consequently, if the actual practices of the Greek Church were in harmony with what had always been done in the Church, they should not be declared null and void. That episode is quite significant; it shows that a school of theologians were disposed to sacrifice to their own principles the Greek ordinations, and also several other practices of the Eastern Churches, had it not been for the far-seeing wisdom and care of the Holy See.

Yet, it was not necessary for theologians to come to such extreme measures, in order to get out of the difficult position in which they had placed themselves owing to systematic hypotheses hastily framed and resting on *a priori* ideas.

Clear-sighted as he was, John Morin realized at once that the institution of the Sacraments had to be distinguished from the determination of their matter and form. Christ may have instituted some Sacraments, in particular Confirmation, Extreme Unction and Orders, without determining Himself, except in a most general way, their matter and form; He may have left to His Church to determine them with precision. This is the only doctrine that can be reconciled with facts:

> Quae . . . relata sunt, evidenter mihi demonstrare pronuntiare. Experiebar enim eos [theologos] nulla græcorum morum scientia tinctos, nulla linguæ græcæ cognitione aspersos, nunquam illis in mentem venisse ut inquirerent, quæ, quot, qualesve essent græcæ ordinationes. Æquum non judicabam ad eorum sola axiomata, tanquam ad lapidem lydium, istas ordinationes exigere; quae cum eis consentiunt, probare; quae dissentiunt, eo ipso statim ut spuria improbare, et ab ordinationum choro eliminare.

videntur maxime probabilem esse eorum Doctorum sententiam qui asserunt Christum Dominum nostrum plerorumque sacramentorum formas et materias generatim tantum instituisse; earum vero determinationem apostolorum et Ecclesiae auctoritati et prudentiae commisisse. Eas enim si Christus instituisset, et apostolis determinasset, eaedem essent, et omni tempore, et apud omnes gentes. Utroque autem modo contrarium deprehenditur. Orientales enim ab Occidentalibus hac in causa plurimum differunt.[86]

True, Morin adds (cap. XVIII, n. 2) that, nevertheless, the facts can be made to agree with the scholastic doctrines. To justify his assertion he maintains, for instance, that the actual Latin formula of absolution: *Ego te absolvo,* is deprecative, for it contains the invocation of the Trinity! Thus it would be like the ancient formulas (cap. XVIII, n. 8). Such explanations prompt us to seek elsewhere the true mind of the learned Oratorian.

If Christ left to His Church to determine the matter and form of some Sacraments, He gave her also by that very fact the power of modifying them; thus we can account for the changes and diversities of practices, which history records. This or that form, for instance a deprecative formula of absolution, may have been validly replaced by an indicative form; nay it may be that for one and the same sacrament, the Latin Church has an indicative form, whilst the Greek Church has a deprecative form, and *vice versa.*[87]

[86] *De disciplina in admin. sacramenti Pœnitentiæ,* lib. VIII, cap. xvii, n. 1. Nulla enim mihi causa necessaria subesse videtur ob quam ab hoc vulgato axiomate recedamus, scilicet immutabiles esse sacramentorum materias et formas, et ubique terrarum easdem prorsus esse in quibuslibet ecclesiis.

[87] Cf. A. Vacant, "Absolution sous forme déprécatoire," *Dict. de Théol.,* i, 244, ff.

Many theologians of the end of the 17th. and of the beginning of the 18th. century, were impressed by Morin's historical researches and adopted the view of the illustrious Oratorian.[88] Most effective in putting an end to their hesitations was a famous text of Innocent IV, which canonists quoted again and again, and which Morin better than anybody else, had known how to turn to account.[89] Innocent IV affirms that, during the Apostolic Age, the rite of priestly ordination consisted only of the imposition of hands accompanied with a prayer, and that it is the Church which instituted the other rites used afterwards.[90]

However Morin's opinion was far from being universally accepted. The ancient conception of matter and form of a sacrament, which, a few years after the Council of Trent, Suarez had somewhat attenuated

[88] John de Lugo (1583–1660), *De Sacramentis in genere,* Disput. II, Sect. v.; Witasse (1660–1716), *De Confirmatione,* Pars I, quæst. 3; Tournely (1658–1729), *De Sacramentis in genere,* quæst. I, art. iv.

[89] Morin, cap. xvii. It is this text which led de Lugo to declare that Jesus Christ did not determine "in individuo" the matter and form of the sacrament of Order: "sed solum voluisse quod conferretur Ordo per aliquod signum sensibile significativum potestatis, quae traditur, et per verba hoc ipsum exprimentia" (*l. c.*).

[90] De ritu apostolico invenitur in epistola ad Timotheum quod manus imponebat (Apostolus) ordinandis, et quod orationem fundebat super eos. Aliam autem formam non invenimus ab eis servatam. Unde credimus quod nisi essent formæ postea inventæ, sufficeret ordinatori, dicere: Sis sacerdos; vel alia æquipollentia verba; sed subsequentibus temporibus formas quæ servantur, Ecclesia ordinavit, et sunt tantæ necessitatis dictæ formæ, quod si, iis non servatis, aliquis fuerit ordinatus, supplendum est quod omissum est, et si formæ servantur, caracter infigitur animæ, id est, figura intellectualis et indeficibilis ostendens ordinem collatum ipsi consecrato.— In capite *Praesbyter, De Sacramentis non iterandis. Innocentii IV in quinque libros Decretatium Commentaria.*— Venetiis, 1610, p. 129.

and made more precise, was again taken up and still more attenuated, that it might be reconciled with the historical facts which now could not be ignored, and thus might be opposed to the school of Morin.

The matter and form of all the Sacraments, it was said, were determined by Christ Himself in a rather precise manner; hence they cannot change, and the Church can introduce in them only slight modifications. For, how could Christ be the institutor of the Sacraments, had He not determined Himself their essential elements? As to the differences recorded by history between the actual and the ancient rites, or between the Eastern and the Western rites, these differences are only accidental. What is essential in the matter of the Sacraments is what has been determined by Christ, what has always existed everywhere: thus the essential matter of Order has always been the imposition of hands: the *traditio instrumentorum* used in the West since the early Middle Ages is an accidental rite. Likewise, what was determined by Christ in the form of the Sacraments,— namely, the meaning and not the words, except for the form of Baptism and of the Eucharist, which was literally determined, is found everywhere and at all times. Under the various forms of Penance, Confirmation and Extreme Unction, there is an identical fundamental meaning: the meaning determined by the Savior Himself.[91]

The followers of Morin's view did not fail to object that there may be more than a difference of words between a deprecative formula of absolution and an

[91] We have exposed this opinion according to TOURNELY (l. c.), who is not in favor of it, and DROUIN, 1682–1742, *De Sacramentis in genere,* quæst. 1, cap. i, par. 5; and quæst. 6, par. 2, who adopts it (MIGNE, *Cursus Theologiæ,* t. XX, 1179, 1351).

indicative and imperative formula of absolution, or between the Latin formula of Confirmation: *Signo te . . .* and the Greek formula: *Signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti.* But these objections were not looked upon as unanswerable; hence, during the 18th. century, the theological schools adopted either the opinion of Suarez or that of Morin.[92]

During the first two-thirds of the 19th. century, the former was almost exclusively followed. At that time, the historical works of the 17th. and 18th. centuries were fallen into discredit, and, at least in France, the critical sense seems to have disappeared. No wonder, then, that Morin's view was somewhat abandoned. Even Perrone (†1876) who gave to the study of facts the share to which it is entitled in Theology, does not adopt this latter view.[93] Most of the theological text-books of the time, which, in truth, were mere compendiums of the works of Suarez and Billuart, could hardly set forth a teaching different from that of the authors whom they were summing up.

But in the last third of the 19th. century, historical studies made considerable progress. Works like those published in France by Mgr. Duchesne on *Christian Worship,* and by Mgr. Batiffol[94] and Father Vacandard[95] on Penance, and by others, to speak only

[92] The most influential defenders of Suarez' opinion were Billuart (1685–1757), *De Sacramentis in communi,* Dissertatio I, art. v, and Benedict xiv, *De Syn.* l. viii, c. x, n. 10.

[93] In his treatise, *De Sacramentis in genere* (Lovanii, 1840), he said nothing of the matter and form or of its determination by Christ.

[94] *Etudes d'histoire et de théologie positive,* 1re série: Les Origines de la Pénitence (Paris, 1906), pp. 43–223.

[95] Particularly in *Revue du Clergé français,* Nov. 15, 1899 — Sept. 15, 1901.

of what has been done in France, set forth a concept of a sacrament for which Morin's opinion alone can account.

Besides, several contemporary theologians have advanced views which either do not differ [96] from it, or at most differ but very little.[97] For they realize that "Nisi enim quamdam latitudinem institutionis admittimus, et si omnia, quae materiam formamque spectant, a priori ex quibusdam congruentiis et subtilibus considerationibus definire volumus, in graves incidimus difficultates ex ipsa historia administrationis sacramentorum petitas." [98]

[96] HURTER, *Theolog. dogm. compendium* (Œniponte, 1900), tom. III, n. 287; TANQUEREY, *Synopsis Theologiae dogmaticae* (1903), tom. II, pp. 197 sq. The statement of the Council of Trent, declaring (sess. xxi, cap. 2) that the Church cannot change the "substance of the Sacraments" is not a positive objection. "Nam in materiis et formis illa sola substantialia sunt quae Christus ipse instituit; jamvero si, ut contendimus, nonnisi modo generico quasdam materias et formas determinaverit, substantia earumdem non mutatur per specificam determinationem ab Ecclesia factam, dummodo generica significatio a Christo determinata retineatur." TANQUEREY, l. c.

[97] BILLOT, *De Ecclesiae sacramentis,* Romae, 1896, tom. I, p. 34: Sufficit . . . ut divina institutio cadat super constitutiva sacramenti sub ratione generali cujusdam signi symbolici, aliunde apti ad certam quamdam significationem sacramentalem (puta significationem traditionis potestatis sacrae) relicta interim competenti auctoritati electione materiae et formae omnino in individuo.

[98] HURTER, *l. c.* If it is true, and with several theologians we believe it is, that the Church can determine and modify the matter and form of some Sacraments, the priest, who wishes to administer the Sacraments in a manner undoubtedly valid, must perform most exactly the ceremonies that are now considered essential.

CHAPTER III

THE EFFICACY OF THE SACRAMENTS

§ I. *The Definition of the Council of Trent.*

The Council of Trent defined that the Sacraments of the New Law "contain" the grace they signify and "confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto," and that grace is "conferred" by the Sacraments *ex opere operato*.[1] These decisions are formulated against the Protestant errors they condemn, and by means of expressions which were used then in the Schools and had a precise signification. Hence it is in contemporary writings that we must look for their historical interpretation.

The formula *ex opere operato* is opposed to the formula *ex opere operantis:*

"Omnes catholici opponunt opus operatum operi operantis." [2]

It signifies that the Sacraments of the New Law, inasmuch as they are external actions, resulting from the application validly made of the sacramental rite

[1] *Ibid. Sess.* VII, *De sacramentis in gen.*, c. 6: Si quis dixerit sacramenta novæ Legis non continere gratiam quam significant, aut gratiam ipsam non ponentibus obicem non conferre. . . . A. S.—c. 8: Si quis dixerit per ipsa novæ Legis sacramenta ex opere operato non conferri gratiam. . . . A. S.—Cfr. G. Goyau, *Moehler* (Paris, 1905), pp. 259, ff.

[2] Bellarmine, *De Sacramentis in gen.*, lib. II, cap. i.

to the subject, possess, in virtue of the Divine institution, a supernatural power which confers grace:

"Id quod active, et proxime, atque instrumentaliter efficit gratiam justificationis, est sola actio illa externa, quae sacramentum dicitur, et haec vocatur opus operatum, accipiendo passive (operatum) ita ut idem sit sacramentum conferre gratiam ex opere operato, quod conferre gratiam ex vi ipsius actionis sacramentalis, a Deo ad hoc institutae, non ex merito agentis, vel suscipientis."

Hence, according to the Catholic teaching, the Christian Sacraments are objectively efficacious; as it is evident in the Baptism of children, their action may be effective independently of the subjective dispositions of the minister and of the subject.

However, the adult is not exempt from lending his coöperation to the reception of grace. Dispositions of faith, of repentance, and others, must be in him; not to impart to the sacrament a power which it possesses by itself, but to remove the obstacles that might oppose the sacramental efficacy:

"Dispositiones ex parte subjecti [requiruntur], non ut causae activae: non enim fides et paenitentia efficiunt gratiam sacramentalem, neque dant efficaciam sacramentis, sed solum tollunt obstacula, quae impedirent ne sacramenta suam efficaciam exercere possent." [3]

A sacrament has then in itself the power of producing grace, and in this sense it "contains" that grace.

[3] *Ibid.* Bellarmine compares the function of the dispositions of an adult to that of dryness in the combustion of wood: the dryness of the wood is the condition, not the cause of its burning. Likewise, the subject's dispositions are the *conditio sine qua non* of the production of grace, not its cause.

Contrary to that doctrine, Protestants taught that the whole efficacy of the Sacraments must be ascribed to the faith of him who receives them:

Non sacramentum, sed fides sacramenti justificat.[4]

Since it is faith alone in God's mercy that justifies, the Sacraments can be nothing but means of strengthening that faith, nothing but tokens of the truthfulness of the promise God made of forgiving sins.

"Nos . . . scientes, ubicumque est promissio divina, ibi requiri fidem. Esse utrumque tam necessarium, ut neutrum sine altero efficax esse possit. Neque enim credi potest, nisi adsit promissio, nec promissio stabilitur, nisi credatur, ambae vero si mutuae sint, faciunt veram et certissimam efficaciam sacramentis. Quare efficaciam sacramenti, *citra promissionem et fidem quaerere,* est frustra niti, et damnationem invenire."[5]

Hence the Sacraments are made efficacious by the interior acts of him who receives them, by his faith in the Divine promise; thus they act *ex opere operantis,* as the rites of the Old Law: for these, according to the teaching current at the time of the Council, did not confer grace, "citra operantium meritum."[6]

[4] Luther, *De Captivitate babylonica,* De sacramento baptismi. *M. Lutheri opera,* Ihenæ, 1557, t. II, p. 287. Cf. Calvin, *Inst. chrét.,* iv, 14–17.

[5] Luther, *Ibid.* The Protestant sacramental system, as well as the Tridentine definitions which condemned it, will be described in the course of the present chapter.

[6] Melchior Cano (1523–1560), *Relectio de Sacramentis in genere,* Pars quinta. This "meritum operantis" was called by theologians, "opus operantis."— Per opus operantis intelligunt [catholici] opus bonum, seu meritorium ipsius operantis.— Bellarmine, *l. c.*

The Catholic dogma of the efficacy of the Sacraments developed with a wonderful logic and in a direction quite contrary to the Protestant heresies. At the outset, the Sacraments are looked upon as means for the forgiveness of sins and for sanctification. Then, a new question is raised during the baptismal controversy. Are the Sacraments so efficacious as to produce their effects independently of the subjective dispositions of the minister and of the subject? Pope St. Stephen and St. Augustine solved the question in the affirmative: the former against St. Cyprian, the latter against the Donatists. It remained to state with precision the relation between the sacramental rite and the grace produced: is this a relation of causality or of mere concomitance? This problem of the causality of the Sacraments took up the attention of theologians from the 12th. century to the Council of Trent. Although the Council did not use in its definitions the concept of cause, yet it intimated that the Sacraments must be considered instrumental causes of grace. As a matter of fact, in modern times, no theologian has been bold enough to deny it. Then, the theological discussion took another direction. As the Sacraments are causes of grace, are they physical or merely moral causes thereof? This is the actual controversy, the concluding point of that very great dogmatic progress, in which we perceive most concretely the powerful vitality of Catholic thought.

§ II. *The Efficacy of the Sacraments at the Beginning of the Church.*

The Bible represents the Christian rites as efficacious means for the forgiveness of sins, for the im-

parting of the Holy Ghost and the conferring of Divine charisms.

It is chiefly the efficacy of Baptism that is set off during the Apostolic age: this is easily accounted for by the prominent place which Christians assigned to this, the initiatory rite of their religion.

St. Peter declares to the Jews converted on the day of Pentecost that they must do penance and be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of" their sins, and that they shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.[7] No longer does penance suffice to obtain the remission of sins, Baptism must be added. "Rise up and be baptized and wash away thy sins invoking the name of Christ," says, later on, Ananias to Saul newly converted.[8]

In St. Paul's Epistles, baptismal efficacy is expressed with still more distinctness; the Apostle's experience had already brought home to him the wonderful action of the Baptism of Jesus. The baptismal immersion is the sepulchre where the old man, that is to say, sin, dies and is buried, and whence the new man comes forth.[9] The purifying power of Baptism is so great that it washes away all sins, however heinous they may be: "Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Do not err: Neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners shall possess the kingdom of God. And such some of you were: but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of our

[7] *Act.*, ii, 38.
[8] *Act.*, xxii, 16.
[9] *Rom.*, vi, 3–1. Cf., p. 2.

Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of our God." [10] That sanctification and justification are wrought by the baptismal ablution and by the Holy Spirit: for the rite imparting the Holy Spirit, which follows the ablution, is regarded as forming with Baptism one moral whole.[11] The baptismal bath, which cleanses from their sins those who enter the Christian society, is the means used by Christ, together "with the word," to purify His Church, that it may appear before Him "not having spot or wrinkle." [12]

Having obtained, through Baptism, the forgiveness of his sins and sanctification, the Christian may "walk in newness of life;" [13] he is "a new creature" [14] and the Father's adopted son.[15] The action of Baptism in the soul, then, may be looked upon as a regenerating action, by which man acquires a new birth, the supernatural birth. The act of generation is that which imparts life to a being; Baptism imparts to man spiritual life; hence it is, according to St. Paul's expression, "the laver of regeneration" (λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας).[16] Salvation is brought about "by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, Whom he hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." In this

[10] Ἀπελούσασθε . . . ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. A manifest allusion to Baptism *in nomine Jesu:* this is the way baptism is described in the Apostolic writings.—Cf. *I Cor.*, vi, 9–11.

[11] This is at least a probable interpretation of the many texts which exhibit the Holy Ghost as given by Baptism.

[12] *Eph.*, v, 27.

[13] *Rom.*, vi, 4.

[14] *Gal.*, vi, 15.

[15] *Rom.*, viii, 15–17.

[16] *Titus*, iii, 5. Cfr. W. Grimm, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum in Libros N. T.* (Lipsiæ, 1903), p. 330.

passage, as in the above mentioned, the action of the Holy Ghost is associated with that of the baptismal bath, in the work of man's regeneration and renewal.

In the Gospel of St. John, the regenerating efficacy of Baptism is affirmed by Jesus Himself, with a distinctness far greater than that of the texts quoted so far.[17] The comparison between man's bodily and his spiritual generation "of water and the Holy Ghost" constitutes the chief theme of the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus. In fact there are in man two kinds of generation: the bodily generation, which has the body for its principle and imparts physical life; and the spiritual generation, which has for its principle water and the Spirit, and gives supernatural life. This spiritual regeneration is absolutely necessary to enter God's kingdom, since the latter is wholly spiritual: "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." [18] The Holy Ghost is together with water, the agent of that spiritual birth; man is regenerated by two united principles: water and the Holy Spirit. It is not certain that the Savior alludes to the manner in which, at the beginning, the world was fashioned with water and with the Holy Ghost moving upon it; [19] but this comparison illustrates quite well the text of the Gospel.

The doctrine of the sanctifying and regenerating efficacy of Baptism is then fundamental in the New Testament writings, and that efficacy is neither subjective, as Protestants would have us believe, nor

[17] *Joan.*, iii, 1–8. Cfr. CALMES, *L'Evangile selon saint Jean* (Paris, 1904), pp. 179, ff.

[18] *Joan.*, iii, 5.

[19] A. LOISY, *Le quatrième Évangile* (Paris, 1903), p. 311.

magical, since it requires the conversion of the heart. After the baptismal ablution, the Apostles laid hands on the newly baptized, and thus imparted to them the Holy Ghost.[20] The imposition of hands, no doubt accompanied with a prayer,[21] was, then, the efficacious means of the imparting of the Holy Spirit: "*διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων δίδοται τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.*" The rite which conferred the Holy Ghost was generally administered immediately after the baptismal ablution,[22] except in cases when deacons[23] alone were present: these could baptize, but not impose hands. The grant of the Holy Spirit, which resulted from the imposition of hands, comprised an interior sanctification of the soul,[24] and charisms, viz., powers of performing wonderful actions, like that "of speaking tongues and prophesying."[25] Those charisms were very important during the Apostolic Age. This is why they are considered the chief effect of the imposition of hands.[26]

A particular charism, that of the government of the churches, deserves special attention. Several times St. Paul speaks of the charisms "that relate to the interior services of the Christian communities," like presiding over the meetings of the faithful, and preaching.[27] St. Timothy was one of those who had

[20] *Act.*, viii, 17, 19; xix, 6.
[21] *Act.*, viii, 15.
[22] *Act.*, xix, 5–6.
[23] *Act.*, viii, 12, 16.
[24] St. Paul insinuates it clearly, when he speaks of the action of the Holy Spirit in the soul of the baptized Christian. *Rom.*, v, 5; viii, 9–28.
[25] *Act.*, xix, 6.
[26] See the description of these charisms in L. DUCHESNE, *Early History of the Church* (N. Y., 1909), pp. 35, ff.
[27] *I Cor.*, xii, 28; *I Thess.*, v, 12, 13. DUCHESNE, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

received that charism of ruling the churches with which he was entrusted, and that charism had been conferred on him by the imposition of the hands of the Apostle and of the presbyterial college.[28] The imposition of hands, conferring the charism of government, was performed, not on neophytes — as the rite which conferred the Holy Ghost — but on the presbyters (πρεσβύτεροι) of the Christian communities. Our sacrament of Order is connected with that imposition of hands, its essential principle.

One of the functions of those presbyters was to pray over the sick, whilst anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. By means of these unctions, accompanied with prayer, they cured those faithful that were sick, and, in case of need, forgave them their sins.[29] The development of Christian doctrine will bring out with precision the efficacy of those unctions of the sick, and show that this efficacy is objective, and does not come, at least exclusively, from the gift of healing which so many personages enjoyed during the Apostolic Age.[30]

We come now to the rite which, with Baptism, held the chief place in Christian worship: the Eucharist. St. Paul alludes to the efficacy it has of making participant in the sacrifice of the Cross, the Christian who eats the Eucharistic bread, and drinks from the cup of the New Covenant. Just as the Jew, by eating the flesh of the victim immolated, shares in the sacrifice he offers, the Pagan, by eating what was offered to an idol, enters into communion with the latter, that is to say, with demons, so also the faithful who partake

[28] *I Tim.*, iv, 14; *I Tim.*, I, 6.
[29] *James*, v, 14–15.
[30] Cf. *I Cor.*, xii, 9, 28.

of the Eucharistic bread and cup participate in the sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross.[31]

In St. John's Gospel, the efficacy of the Eucharist is set forth by the Savior in a new and more vivid light. Christ's flesh is a food and His Blood is a drink.[32] The Eucharist is the spiritual food of the Christian; it produces in the soul effects similar to those which the material food produces in the body. The latter is assimilated into the body and nourishes it. Likewise, by the Eucharist, Jesus is closely united with the Christian; He abides in the Christian, and the Christian abides in Him; Jesus communicates to the Christian, with whom He has united Himself, the life which He holds from the Father.[33] Thus, the Eucharist is the preëminently efficacious means, by which the Christian has eternal life and will share, on the last day, in the glorious resurrection.[34]

So, the efficacy of the Eucharist and that of Baptism drew in a special manner the attention of the minds during the Apostolic era; for these two rites made up, by themselves, the chief part of Christian worship. The subsequent development of doctrine will manifest, with all the precision that could be expected, the efficacy of the other rites of Christianity. The efficacy of the rite of Penance, in particular, the efficacy of the power of forgiving sins, entrusted by Jesus Christ to His Apostles and to His Church [35] is soon to be set off in a specially vivid manner.

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[31] *I Cor.*, x, 14–21; Cf. Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, pp. 13–20.
[32] *John*, vi, 56.
[33] *John*, vi, 57.
[34] *John*, vi, 58.
[35] *John*, vi, 54, 55.

* * *

In the writings of the Fathers of the 2nd. century, it is chiefly the efficacy of Baptism and that of the Eucharist that are mentioned, at times in most expressive terms.

The apocalyptic book of Hermas, the *Shepherd,* represents the necessity and efficacy of Baptism, under this beautiful symbol. In one of his visions, Hermas saw a tower which typified the Church. That tower was building on water,[36] because, according to the explanation given to Hermas, it is from the water of Baptism that come life and salvation.[37] The stones that enter into the structure of the tower figure the faithful of the Old and of the New Covenant who make up the Church.[38] All the stones that were used for the construction of the tower, were taken from the bottom of the water on which the tower was built.[39] Hermas asked why this was done. Because — this was the reply — any one who wishes to be a part of the tower must pass through the waters of Baptism. For it is in the baptismal waters that man gets rid of the sins of his past life and draws a new life, without which no one can enter into the kingdom of God. "For before a man has borne the name of [the Son of] God, he is dead; but when he has received the seal,[40] he layeth aside his deadness, and resumeth life. The seal then is the water: so they go down in the

[36] *Vis.,* iii, 2^4.

[37] *Vis.,* iii, 3^5.

[38] Hermas says that in order to become stones of that tower and thus enter the Kingdom of God, the just of the Old Covenant were baptised in Hades by the apostles and the didascali who went there for that purpose.— *Sim.,* ix, 16^{5-7}.

[39] *Sim.,* ix, 16^{1-2}.

[40] Σφραγίδα. Baptism is called σφραγὶς in the *Shepherd,* as in

water dead, and they come up alive." [41] The efficacy of baptismal waters to wash sins away and impart supernatural life, cannot be expressed with more energy.

But Hermas notices that several of the stones that made up the tower are being thrown aside. These are the faithful who sinned after their Baptism, and who can resume their place in the tower if they do penance.[42] That postbaptismal penance, an extraordinary concession, a kind of jubilee which Hermas grants only once, restores to sinners the grace of their Baptism. On account of their deeds of repentance, God renews in them the baptismal "seal" they had broken by sinning.[43]

The Epistle of the Pseudo-Barnabas alludes to the efficacy of Baptism, in terms similar to those of the *Shepherd*. The author of that epistle wrote to strengthen the faith of a Christian community, disturbed by the Judaizing doctrines. In order to crush the pretensions of the false teachers, Barnabas attempts to prove, by means of an exegesis in which allegorism plays an important part, not only that the Old Covenant has come to an end, but even that its only purpose was to betoken and prepare the New Covenant. Hence any detail of the Old Law becomes for him the figure of some rite of the New Law. The redeeming passion of Christ and Baptism by which we share in it, were foretold several times.[44] The river flowing from the right side of the sanctuary,

most of the Greek documents of the 2nd. century. This word expresses the state of holiness in which man is placed by Baptism.

[41] *Sim.*, ix, 36^{1-4}. Translation Lightfoot. Cf. *Mand.* iv, 3^{1}.

[42] *Sim.*, ix, 13–14. Cf. TIXERONT, *op. cit.*, p. 123, ff.

[43] *Sim.*, viii, 6^{3}.

[44] xi–xii.

of which Ezekiel speaks,[45] represents Baptism: the fine trees that spring forth from it, typify the Christians coming forth, full of spiritual fruits, from the baptismal waters. "We go down into the water laden with sins and filth, and rise up from it bearing fruit, having the fear of God in the heart, and hope in Jesus in our spirit." [46]

This forgiveness of sins and this renewal of the soul by Baptism are mentioned also by St. Justin [47] and by St. Irenæus,[48] who merely reproduce the teaching of the Fourth Gospel.

Likewise the same teaching is commented on by the authors of the 2nd. century, when they speak of the efficacy of the Eucharist. The Eucharistic bread and wine are the means which the Christian may use to keep up in himself the supernatural life he received in his Baptism, and to secure the resurrection of his body at the end of time.

At the beginning of the 2nd. century, in keeping with the ideal of holiness peculiar to the early Church, the faithful hardly believed that a baptized person could fall into sin after Baptism. The baptized Christian who wishes to avoid the torments of Hell, ought to preserve intact the purity of his soul, to keep, according to the *Secunda Clementis* "pure and unstained the seal" [49] of his Baptism. This was the very same

[45] *Ez.*, xlvii, 12. Barnabas quotes after the Septuagint: "And there was a river streaming from the right hand and beautiful trees rose up from it, and whosoever shall eat of them shall live for ever."

[46] *Barnab.*, xi, 11.

[47] *I Apol.*, 61, 66.

[48] *Adv. Haer.*, iii, 17^2.

[49] viii, 6; vi, 9. Such high ideal of the holiness of life in a baptized person is commonly met with in the literature of this period, especially in the *Shepherd* of Hermas. *Mandat.*, iv, 3^2.

ideal that St. Paul proposed to the early Christians, when he entreated them with so much insistence no longer to commit sin, to which they were "dead" by Baptism.[50] Nay, that idea of the holiness of a Christian's life was pushed to the extreme during the 2nd. century by some who fell into the excesses of Encratism.[51]

That lofty conception of Christian life enables us to understand the great part ascribed to the Eucharist, for the preservation of baptismal holiness. It is the Eucharist that makes the faithful who share in it "incorruptible" in the midst of the world, "immortal" in spite of all the causes of death, with which they are surrounded. It is, according to St. Ignatius of Antioch, "the medicine of immortality and the antidote, that we should not die but live forever in Jesus Christ." [52] This same idea is found in an Encratic document of that period, the *Acta Thomae*. "O Lord," says the apostle, when blessing the Eucharistic bread, "change this bread into the bread of life so that they who shall eat of it may remain incorruptible. Since Thou hast vouchsafed that they receive this gift, grant, we beseech Thee, that they may share in Thy Kingdom, that they persevere unstained during this life, so that they may be partakers of Thy wonderful and immortal blessings." [53]

The Eucharist is efficacious not only for preserving the life of the soul, but also for securing the immor-

[50] *Rom.*, vi, 1–4. Cf. *Hebr.*, vi, 4–8.
[51] L. Duchesne, *op. cit.*, pp. 373, ff.
[52] *Ephes.*, xx, 2.
[53] Quoted by Mgr. Batiffol, *Les origines de la Pénitence, Etudes d'Histoire et de Théologie positive,* 1re série, Paris, 1906, p. 46.

tality of the body through the resurrection. This point was set forth especially by those authors of the 2nd. century, who had to convince heretics of the dogma of the resurrection of the body. In the text quoted above and in others too,[54] St. Ignatius has in view not only the effects of the Eucharist as to the soul, but also the immortality of the whole man.

It is chiefly St. Irenæus, the great adversary of the Gnostics, that insists on this principle of resurrection deposited in our souls by the Savior's flesh and blood. According to the Gnostics whom he opposes, there is in us an antagonism between the flesh and the spirit; the latter alone can share in salvation, the former, being a principle essentially evil, is given up to perdition. Now, St. Irenæus answers, "How can they say that the flesh, which is nourished with the body of the Lord and with His blood, goes to corruption and does not partake of life?" [55] The Eucharist places in our bodies a principle of incorruption, which will raise them up when the moment comes. "As the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly; so also our bodies, when they receive the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the resurrection to eternity." [56]

A few years later Tertullian used a similar argument to prove to the Valentinians and to the Marcionites the dogma of the resurrection. The flesh will rise, he says, because it is the essential condition of

[54] Cf. *Smyrn.*, vii, 1.
[55] *Adv. Hær.*, iv, 18^5.
[56] *Ibid.*; cf. v, 2^3.— Transl., W. H. Rambaut.

salvation: through its intermediary, the soul is sanctified, especially in the reception of the Sacraments of the Christian initiation, one of which is the Eucharist. "There is not a soul that can at all procure salvation, except it believe whilst it is in the flesh, so true it is that the flesh is the very condition on which salvation hinges. And since the soul is, in consequence of its salvation, chosen to the service of God, it is the flesh which actually renders it capable of such service. The flesh indeed is washed, in order that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed [with the cross], that the soul too may be fortified; the flesh is shadowed with the imposition of hands, that the soul also may be illuminated by the Spirit; the flesh feeds on the Body and Blood of Christ, that the soul likewise may fatten on [its] God. They cannot then be separated in their recompense — when they are united in their service." [57]

That forcible affirmation of the efficacy of the rites of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist makes us realize that we are in presence of a doctrine which was already considerably developed. We find actually in Tertullian the first speculations about the efficacy of the Sacraments.

§ III. *The Earliest Speculations concerning the Efficacy of the Sacraments. Tertullian and Origen.*

It is in his treatise *On Baptism* that Tertullian exposes his conception of the efficacy of the baptismal rite. This work aims at instructing catechumens and at forearming the faith of Christians against the

[57] *De Resurr. carnis*, 8.— Transl., P. Holmes.

heretical doctrines of a certain Quintilla. For this purpose, Tertullian takes up the "reasons" of Christian traditions, in order to oppose them to the perfidious insinuations of the heretical "serpent."

The effects of Baptism are those we have already so often mentioned. The sacrament blots out the sins committed "whilst we were blind"; sins are stains that stick to the soul and that are washed away by the baptismal waters.[58] With the sins, the punishment also is removed. By blotting out the sins, Baptism frees the Christian from death, and restores to him the divine likeness which God had given to the first man.[59] Thus Baptism sets us on the path of eternal life, and imparts us a new birth: for we are born in the water, like the Divine ἰχθύς, Jesus Christ.[60]

But the most original part of Tertullian's doctrine is that which relates to the mode of the efficacy of Baptism.[61] Quintilla seems to have denied chiefly the efficacy of baptismal water, under pretence that that efficacy is past understanding. How can a beggarly element like water impart salvation?[62] "O contemptible incredulity!" exclaims the vigorous African: "Is it not the proper of Divine action, to combine power with simplicity? God *did* really impart to the water that wonderful efficacy, which some refuse to admit."

The proofs to which Tertullian appeals will become classical. At the beginning of the world, when the Holy Ghost hovered over the waters, all of them re-

[58] *De bapt.*, 4.
[59] *De bapt.*, 5.
[60] *De bapt.*, 1.
[61] Cf. D'Alès, *La Théologie de Tertullien*, pp. 333, ff.
[62] *De bapt.*, 2.

ceived the power of sanctifying, and accordingly it makes no difference whether a man be baptized in a sea or a pool, a stream or a font, a lake or a trough . . . However, in order that the waters, thus destined to Baptism from the very beginning, may have the power of sanctifying, God must be called upon. As soon as that invocation of God has been made, a spirit supervenes from Heaven, as formerly the Angel of the pool of Bethesda (*John,* v, 4), rests over the waters and sanctifies them. These, after being thus sanctified, imbibe the power of sanctifying.[63] This virtue becomes material, as it were, and passes into the water itself: a text to which the upholders of the physical causality of the Sacraments will not fail to appeal.

What is that invocation of God, which makes the water efficacious? The Trinitarian formula that accompanies the ablution, or the prayer of the blessing of baptismal water? It is apparently the prayer of the blessing of the water.[64] Later on, after St. Cyprian, authors will teach that the "sanctification" of baptismal water is brought about by the blessing of the pools, immediately before the conferring of Baptism.[65]

[63] *De bapt.,* 4: Omnes aquae de pristina originis praerogativa sacramentum sanctificationis consequuntur invocato Deo. Supervenit enim statim spiritus de caelis et aquis superest sanctificans eas de semetipso et ita sanctificatae vim sanctificandi combibunt. . . . Igitur medicatis quodammodo aquis per angeli interventum, et spiritus in aquis corporaliter diluitur et caro in eisdem spiritaliter mundatur. Cf. cap. 5.

[64] Undoubtedly for Tertullian, Baptism is administered in the name of the three Divine Persons: *De bapt.,* 13; *Adv. Prax.,* 26. But it is not certain that he had in view the baptismal formula, when he speaks of that "invocation of God" by which the waters are sanctified.

[65] Cf. above, pp. 56, ff.

The material ablution, produced on the body by the sanctified waters, acts then on the soul and purifies it. Likewise, the sacred unction which the neophyte receives after the baptismal bath, is spiritually profitable to his soul.[66] The imposition of hands which follows, and which is accompanied with blessing and with the invocation of the Holy Spirit, brings down that Spirit into the baptized Christian.

Yet, notwithstanding the efficacy of the baptismal rite for cleansing and purifying, the catechumen is obliged, previously to his Baptism, to do a serious penance. As a matter of fact, the Church always required from the candidates to Baptism a sincere penance for their sins.[67] According to the Didachè one must prepare for Baptism by one or two days of fasting; the minister and other persons, if possible, must also fast.[68] St. Justin is still more explicit. In order to be admitted to Baptism, he says, it is necessary to believe the truth of Christian doctrine, to promise to live according to that doctrine, to pray and to ask from God, in fasting, the forgiveness of one's sins.[69] At the time of Tertullian that preparation for Baptism was a regular institution and formed what is called the catechumenate. It is precisely to the catechumens that the *De Paenitentia* is addressed, in which the penitential doctrine of the African priest is found. The first part of the book (1-6) treats of the penance that has to be done before Baptism. That penance, required from the catechumen, is so perfect,[70]

[66] *De bapt.*, 7.
[67] *Acts*, ii, 38.
[68] *Didaché*, vii, 4.
[69] *I Apol.*, 61.
[70] The description of that penance is found in the *De Baptismo*, 20.

and is so efficacious for the purification of the sinner, that one might be tempted to deem Baptism useless.[71] Yet this is not Tertullian's thought. If he demands so rigorous a conversion of those who wish to descend into the baptismal waters, it is in order to be sure that, once baptized, the Christian will never fall again into sin.[72] The Church must consist only of saints!

However, if one unfortunately sins after Baptism, there is a "*secunda tabula post naufragium*," a second repentance, to which recourse may be had, but only once during one's life.[73] Hermas had spoken of this second penance, as an exceptional and temporary favor. Tertullian presents it as a permanent institution, and draws a detailed description of it.[74] The series of the external acts which constitute postbaptismal penance, is called *exomologesis*. The first of these acts is the confession of sins;[75] the second is the satisfaction, always public, which follows the confession;[76] the third is the intervention of the Church in the forgiveness of sins. This last act interests us especially, since we are treating of the efficacy of the

[71] *De paenit.*, 6: Lavacrum illud obsignatio est fidei, quæ fides a paenitentiae fide incipitur et commendatur. *Non ideo abluimur ut delinquere desinamus, sed quia desiimus jam corde loti sumus.* Haec enim prima audientis intinctio est, metus integer.— To understand rightly Tertullian's doctrine on this point we must not forget that the distinction between contrition and attrition was not known to him.

[72] *De paenit.*, 6; *De bapt.*, 20.

[73] *De paenit.*, 7.

[74] *De paenit.*, 7–12. On the penitential doctrine of Tertullian, see TIXERONT, *op. cit.*, pp. 364, ff.; BATIFFOL, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, ff.; D'ALÈS, *op. cit.*, pp. 339, ff.

[75] *De paenit.*, 9.

[76] *De paenit.*, 9.

Sacraments. Differently from Hermas, Tertullian points out explicitly that intervention of the Church in the forgiveness of sins: the Church not only proffers the pardon, she actually grants it. True, in the *De Paenitentia,* that intervention of the Church is not represented as an act of absolution by the Bishop, but as a prayer, made by the faithful, to obtain from God the sinner's forgiveness. That prayer is indeed infallibly efficacious, for the faithful are the Church, the Church is Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is always heard by His Father:

"Ecclesia vero Christus. Ergo cum te ad fratrum genua protendis, Christum contrectas, Christum exoras. Æque illi cum super te lacrymas agunt, Christus patitur, Christus patrem deprecatur. Facile impetratur semper, quod Filius postulat." [77]

It is impossible not to ascribe to that prayer of the Church a real efficacy for obtaining from God the forgiveness of sins.

In the *De Pudicitia,* Tertullian sets down a doctrine far more precise. He tells us that the Bishop is the depositary of the power of remitting sins,[78] that at Rome Pope Callistus made use of his power, to remit the sins of adultery and of fornication:

"Ego et moechiae et fornicationis delicta paenitentia functis dimitto," [79]

and justified his conduct by alleging the power of the

[77] *De paen.,* 10.
[78] *De pudic.,* 18.
[79] *De pudic.,* 1.

keys, entrusted by Christ to St. Peter and to his successors.[80]

As a matter of fact, the Church holds from Christ the power of forgiving sins. But at the beginning she used that power only partially. At the time of Tertullian, she refused to forgive three kinds of sins: apostasy, fornication or adultery, and murder; the pardon of these sins was reserved to God. Pope Callistus mitigated that discipline and granted forgiveness to sins of the flesh. It is this measure of indulgence, which Tertullian, after becoming a Montanist, condemns so strongly in the *De Pudicitia*. To the practice of the Bishop of Rome he opposes the Montanistic theory. God alone may remit the sins *ad mortem,* viz., apostasy, the sins of adultery and fornication, and murder. True, the Church has power to remit them, but she ought not to use that power, and in case she would use it, she should do so not through the Bishops, but through the spiritual men, through the prophets, to whom the charism of the remission of sins has been granted.[81] Tertullian intended thus to take away from the ecclesiastical hierarchy and to transfer to Montanistic illuminism, the power of forgiving all sins. Pope Callistus, on the contrary, affirmed by his actions that the members of the hierarchy alone were its depositaries and may use it as they deem proper.

This twofold result was still more emphasized, a few years later, in the reconciliation of the *lapsi* and in the Novatian crisis.[82] St. Cyprian's protests

[80] *De pudic.*, 21.

[81] *De pudicitia*, 21. Among the rigorists there was also HIPPOLYTUS, *Philosoph.*, ix, 11.

[82] Cf. TIXERONT, pp. 373–380; BATIFFOL, pp. 111, ff.

against the pretensions of confessors and martyrs to reconcile the *lapsi* with the Church, and to have them admitted into the communion, "penance not yet performed, exomologesis not yet made, the hands of the Bishop not yet laid upon them," [83] distinctly prove the clear knowledge the Church had then, that the power of remitting sins resides exclusively in her hierarchy. And this power is unlimited, since Pope Cornelius, following on the footsteps of Callistus, decided that the *lapsi* might be absolved from the crime of apostasy [84]; a decision which gave rise to the Novatian schism, just as the decision of Pope Callistus had called forth the protests of Tertullian, after he became a Montanist.

From all these discussions of the 3rd. century concerning Penance, we may infer the universal belief in the efficacy of the forgiveness granted by the Church. The Montanists refused to admit that that power of forgiving was vested in the ecclesiastical hierarchy; the Novatians claimed that that power was limited; but nobody questioned its value. Penance is a second Baptism; any one that passes through its various exercises, recovers his innocence before God.

* * *

It is not only in the West that the pardon granted by the Church to sins committed after Baptism, is considered efficacious: we find the same belief in the East, particularly at Alexandria. Origen affirms that the function of remitting sins is reserved to the ministers of the Church, especially to the Bishops:

[83] *Ep.* xvi, 2, etc.
[84] St. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxvii, 6.

"Israelita, si peccet, id est laicus, ipse suum non potest auferre peccatum: sed requirit levitam, indiget sacerdote, imo potius et adhuc horum aliquid eminentius quaerit: pontifice opus est, ut peccatorum remissionem possit accipere." [85]

However, the ministers of the Church ought not to forgive the *crimina mortalia,* viz., idolatry, adultery and fornication, and murder.[86] At Alexandria, as at Carthage in Tertullian's time, these sins were reserved to God.

Origen's teaching on the efficacy of Baptism and of the Eucharist is more precise. If Baptism purifies the soul and cleanses it from all its stains, it is owing to the "power of the invocation of the adorable Trinity." [87] The ablution holds from that invocation all its virtue. Likewise, it is the word pronounced over the bread, that is to say, the narrative of the institution, and the epiclesis, that imparts to the Eucharist the sanctifying effect which it produces in the communicant properly disposed, and the nature of which Origen does not explain.[88] These principles concerning the efficacy of Baptism and of the Eucharist will be taken up again and developed by the writers of the following centuries.

§ IV. *The Part of the Minister and that of the Subject in the Efficacy of the Sacraments.*

Three agents concur in producing the effects of the Sacraments: the minister, the subject and the rite.

[85] *In Numeros,* hom. x, 1; *P.G.,* xii, 635.
[86] *De oratione,* 28; *P.G.,* xi, 529.
[87] *In Joan.,* vi, 17; *P.G.,* xiv, 257.
[88] *In Matth.,* xi, 14; *P.G.,* xiii, 949. According to Clement of Alexandria, the Eucharist is a food and a drink which impart immortality. *Quis dives,* 23. His doctrine does not differ at all from that of the above mentioned Fathers.

What is the special part of each one of them? Penance is required from the candidate to Baptism: to what extent is it necessary, that the sacrament may be valid? And, if the sacrament happens to be conferred by a heretic or even merely by an unworthy minister, must it be considered null? Up to that time no one had treated these questions. Yet, they had to be solved, before the dogma of the efficacy might progress at all. The baptismal controversy in the time of St. Cyprian, and later on the discussions between St. Augustine and the Donatists obtained that result; hence their great importance in the history of Sacramentary Theology.

a.— The Baptismal Controversy — St. Cyprian and Pope St. Stephen.[89]

Can a heretic confer a valid Baptism? This is the problem which confronted the Christian mind in the first half of the 3rd. century. It was not raised before, because up to that time, there had been no heretical sect separated altogether from the Church, organized and administering the Sacraments by itself; there had been heretics more or less isolated and hidden among the faithful. When these heretics became converted and returned to the true faith, it was unnecessary to raise any question as to the value of their Baptism, since they had received it in the bosom of the true Church: all that was demanded of them was penance.

But towards the close of the 2nd. century, Marcion-

[89] Cf. Tixeront, pp. 392–403; Duchesne, *op. cit.*, pp. 303–311; Hefele, *History of the Councils,* vol. 1, pp. 98–116. We have confined ourselves to the doctrinal aspect of this famous controversy — this being the only aspect referring to our question.

ism and, somewhat later, Montanism formed independent churches, which baptized their adherents. Now several of those who had been baptized in heresy gave up their sect and asked to enter the Catholic Church. Then the question naturally came up: What was to be thought of the value of the Baptism administered in heretical sects? Was the Christian initiation performed by an heretical sect to be looked upon as sufficient, and were the converts from that sect to be admitted immediately into the Catholic Church, or were the Church authorities to consider it void, to treat the newcomers as heathens and begin again every ceremony that had taken place? It is in this most practical shape that the problem of the value of heretical Baptisms presented itself.

The first solutions that were given were likewise practical. It was only the conflict of practices that made of this question, chiefly disciplinary at the outset, a question of doctrine and principle.

Two practices were adopted.

At Rome, at Cæsarea of Palestine, and also at Alexandria, the Baptism conferred in an heretical sect was admitted as valid, provided the essential rites had been observed. The ecclesiastical authorities contented themselves with reconciling the heretics to the Church by the imposition of hands and by the unction with oil, the *consignatio*.[90] In Africa, especially at Carthage, and in the churches of Syria and Asia

[90] The rite of imparting the Holy Spirit was the same for the reconciliation of heretics as for Confirmation. St. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxiii, 6. Cf. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, pp. 338, ff., who points out a difference of expression: *consignatio* being the term employed when it is a question of ordinary confirmation, whilst *manus impositio* designates the reconciliation of heretics.

Minor, the Baptism conferred in heresy was, on the contrary, deemed valueless; the Christian initiation performed by an heretical sect was looked upon as null and had to be wholly repeated.

This disagreement gave rise in 256 to a hot controversy between Pope St. Stephen and St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, a controversy which brought the question into its doctrinal phase. The study of the thesis and of the arguments of both sides will enable us to perceive distinctly the state of the sacramental doctrine in the middle of the 3rd. century, and to understand how the doctrine of the objective efficacy of Baptism came out of all these discussions, and triumphed definitively.

* * *

St. Cyprian's thesis was that which had been already maintained by Tertullian in a treatise *On Baptism,* about the year 200. The chief reason alleged by Tertullian for discarding the Christian initiation performed by heretics is drawn from the unity of Baptism. There is only one Baptism, according to the teaching of the Gospel and of Paul, just as there is only one God and one Church in Heaven. Heretics, who are outside the Catholic communion, have neither our God, nor our Christ, nor our Baptism. If they have not our Baptism, then they have no Baptism at all: otherwise, we would say that there are two Baptisms.[91] Hence, he who has been baptized in an heretical sect must be looked upon as a heathen, and even as less than a heathen.[92]

St. Cyprian takes up that argument and strengthens

[91] *De bapt.,* 15.
[92] *De pudicitia,* 19.

it with his copious teaching on the Church.[93] The author of the *De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate* could understand and develop Tertullian's argumentation without the least difficulty. There is only one Baptism as there is only one Church, one God, and one Christ, and this Baptism is found only in the unity of the Church. To break with the unity of the Church then is to break with Baptism, the sacrament of unity:

"Traditum est enim nobis quod sit unus Deus et Christus unus et una spes et fides una et una ecclesia et baptisma unum non nisi in una ecclesia constitutum, a qua [unitate] quisque discesserit cum haereticis necesse est inveniatur, quos dum contra ecclesiam vindicat, sacramentum divinae traditionis impugnat. Cujus unitatis sacramentum expressum videmus etiam in cantico canticorum ex persona Christi dicentis: *hortus conclusus, soror mea, sponsa, fons signatus, puteus aquae vivae, paradisus cum fructu pomorum.*[94] . . . Sententiam nostram non novam promimus, sed jam pridem ab antecessoribus nostris statutam . . . censentes scilicet et pro certo tenentes neminem baptizari foris extra ecclesiam posse, cum sit baptisma unum in sancta ecclesia constitutum."[95]

Besides, to ascribe some value to the Baptism of heretics would be to forget the role of the Church in the forgiveness of sins and in the imparting of heavenly gifts: a role which St. Cyprian exaggerates at the expense of the sacramental rite. How could the Baptism of heretics remit sins and impart grace, since that remission cannot take place outside the Church?

[93] The arguments in favor of rebaptism are developed in St. Cyprian's letters (lxix–lxxiv) as well as in the letter of Firmilian (lxxv).

[94] *Ep.* lxxiv, 11. Cf. *De cathol. eccl. Unit.*, 11.

[95] *Ep.* lxx, 1. Cf. lxxi, 1.

Far from remitting sins, heretics do but multiply them. How could heresy bring forth children to Christ since it is not His Spouse: a dignity reserved to the true Church? It can bring forth children only to the devil:

"Quomodo baptizans dare alteri remissam peccatorum potest? . . . Intelligimus remissionem peccatorum non nisi in ecclesia dari, apud haereticos autem ubi ecclesia non sit non peccata dimitti.[96] . . . Si autem in lavacro id est in baptismo est regeneratio, quomodo generare filios Deo haeresis per Christum potest quae Christi sponsa non est? Ecclesia est enim sola quae Christo conjuncta et adunata spiritaliter filios generat, eodem apostolo rursus dicente: *Christus dilexit Ecclesiam et se ipsum tradidit pro ea ut eam sanctificaret, purgans eam lavacro aquae.* Si igitur haec est dilecta et sponsa quae sola a Christo sanctificatur et lavacro ejus sola purgatur, manifestum est haeresim, quae sponsa Christi non sit nec purgari nec sanctificari lavacro ejus possit, filios Deo generare non posse.[97] . . . Vitae fonte deserto vitalis et salutaris aquae gratiam pollicentur [haeretici]. Non abluuntur illic homines sed potius sordidantur, nec purgantur delicta sed immo cumulantur. Non Deo nativitas illa sed diabolo filios generat." [98]

Besides how could the baptized heretic, who has not the faith of the Church, receive grace and obtain the forgiveness of his sins? [99]

In his argumentation, St. Cyprian does not distinguish at all between the validity of Baptism and its fruitful reception, and this accounts for his involuntary errors. For it is quite true that Baptism, re-

[96] *Ep.* lxx, 1, 2.
[97] *Ep.* lxxiv, 6.
[98] *De cathol. eccl. Unit.,* 11.
[99] *Ep.* lxxiii, 4, 17, 18.

ceived in an heretical sect by a subject not properly disposed — at that time the possibility of good faith in a heretic was not granted — does not remit sins nor impart grace. Yet, an unfruitful Baptism, even outside the Church, may be valid and produce the *character,* as St. Augustine will say later on. But, in the middle of the 3rd. century, these distinctions were not made; the dogma of efficacy had not yet been analyzed with precision.

Moreover, St. Cyprian was unable to find out, and even to understand those distinctions, for his conception of the efficacy of Baptism is opposed to them diametrically, since it implies the denial of the objective value of the Sacraments. If the heretical Baptism is not valid, it is not only because, outside the Church, the forgiveness of sins and the bestowal of grace cannot take place, but also because after all its value depends on the minister's subjective dispositions, on his faith, even on his sanctity, as the Bishop of Carthage affirms, thus pushing his view to its utmost consequence. Nobody, he says, can give what he has not: how could he that has neither the true faith, nor grace, nor the Holy Ghost, make others share in those gifts?

"Quis autem potest dare quod ipse non habeat, aut quomodo potest spiritalia gerere qui ipse amiserit Spiritum Sanctum? Et idcirco baptizandus est et innovandus qui ad Ecclesiam rudis venit, ut intus per sanctos sanctificetur." [1]

On the other hand, the "sanctification" of the baptismal piscina is absolutely necessary that the water may have the power of purifying:

[1] *Ep.* lxx, 2.

"Oportet vero mundari et sanctificari aquam prius a sacerdote, ut possit baptismo suo peccata hominis qui baptizatur abluere." [2]

But "how could he who is impure and does not possess the Holy Spirit purify and sanctify the water?" [3] Heretics, then, cannot sanctify the elements of the Sacraments: the water of Baptism, the oil, the Eucharistic bread. Hence, we cannot find outside the Church, Baptism, nor Eucharist, nor Confirmation,[4] nor Ordination. Firmilian, Bishop of Cæsarea,[5] held views in every respect identical with those of the Bishop of Carthage.

They contend that the opponents of the reiteration of Baptism themselves acknowledge, that the Confirmation of heretics is null, since they repeat the imposition of hands and the *consignatio* to impart the Holy Spirit to the converts from heresy. Why deal differently with the two Sacraments by which we are born again from the water and the Spirit? If the rite which confers the Holy Ghost is not considered valid among heretics, neither ought Baptism to be considered such.[6]

Grounded, as it was, on arguments apparently quite solid, and maintained by men who enjoyed a great moral authority, the thesis of rebaptism, humanly speaking, was sure to triumph. However, the Christian mind took another direction, owing to the supernatural action of the Holy Ghost, who guides the

[2] *Ep.* lxx, 1.
[3] *Ep.* lxx, 1.
[4] *Ep.* lxx, 2.
[5] *Ep.* lxxv (Hartel, ii, 810, ss.).
[6] St. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxiv, 5; *Sententiae episcoporum*, 5 (Hartel, I, p. 439).

Church and hinders her from falling into error at the decisive moment when she becomes explicitly conscious of the revealed truth. In the baptismal controversy, that Divine action shows itself obviously, so little did the human chances of success seem to be on the side of the Roman Church.

To St. Cyprian and Firmilian's conception of the efficacy of the Sacraments Pope St. Stephen opposes another conception, based on the immemorial custom of the Roman Church, and which supposes the objective character of the value of Baptism. No one, says the Pope, must rebaptize the heretics that come back to the Catholic Church, but be content, according to the custom, to impose hands on them for penance.[7] This is the practice which we received from the Apostles, and which we follow.[8] For in Baptism we must not pay attention to the worth of the minister, but to the power of the invocation of the Trinity.[9] The invocation of the Trinity and of the name of Jesus is able by itself to produce the "sanctification of Baptism."[10] The objective efficacy of the baptismal rite, independent of the minister's faith, is thus proclaimed both by the practice of the Roman Church and by the answers of the Pope. The minister's part in Baptism consists in performing the essential ceremonies.

However, at least as they are recorded by St. Cyprian and by Firmilian, the Pope's answers are rather

[7] St. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxiv, 1.
[8] *Ep.* lxxiii, 13.
[9] *Ep.* lxxv, 9; Cf. lxxiv, 5.
[10] *Ep.* lxxv, 18, 9. The author of the *De Rebaptismate* places great stress on the power of the Divine names to show the validity of heretical Baptism.

vague and open to many objections. Is Baptism so efficacious

"ut quicumque et ubicumque in nomine Christi baptizatus fuerit consequatur statim gratiam Christi"[11]?

Are the subject's dispositions useless for the production of grace, and ought not Pope St. Stephen to distinguish here the valid reception of Baptism from its fruitful reception?

The author of the *De Rebaptismate* who set to work in order to defend St. Stephen's party and to refute the rebaptizers' objections, will outline this distinction. He does it, by resolving a difficulty of the rebaptizers which seemed to him particularly weighty. This difficulty, which we have already mentioned, is as follows:

Baptismal regeneration is brought about by the water and by the Spirit, according to the Scripture; the water cannot produce it without the Spirit, nor the Spirit without the water. This is why that regeneration is wrought by the two Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation acting together. Since according to all, this last Sacrament is not valid among heretics, neither is baptismal regeneration possible among them, and their Baptism is null.[12]

[11] *Ep.* lxxv, 18; lxxiv, 5.

[12] *Sententiae episc.*, 5 (Hartel, I, p. 439): In evangelio divina sua voce Dominus noster Christus locutus est dicens: *nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu non potest introire in regnum Dei.* Hic est Spiritus qui ab initio ferebatur super aquam. Neque enim Spiritus sine aqua separa[tim opera]ri potest nec aqua sine Spiritu. Male ergo sibi quidam interpretantur ut dicant, quod per manus impositionem Spiritum Sanctum accipiant et sic recipiantur, cum manifestum sit utroque sacramento debere eos renasci in ecclesia catholica. Cf. *Epp.* lxxiii, 21; lxxii, 1; *De rebapt.*, 3. At that time Confirmation was not yet clearly distinguished from Baptism, but was considered by re-

The author of the *De Rebaptismate* answers that regeneration by water may be separated from that by the Spirit: one may exist without the other, and precisely this happens in the Baptism of heretics.[13] Owing to the virtue of the invocation of the name of Jesus, heretical immersion is valid and begins the work of regeneration; hence it must not be renewed.[14] But regeneration is completely wrought only by the "Baptism in the Holy Ghost," in which "our salvation resides," and which cannot be administered outside the Church. Therefore the heretic, baptized in heresy, cannot be saved except on condition that he gives up his errors, does penance, and receives, in the Church, the rite that confers the Holy Spirit.

"Ideo cum salus nostra in baptismate Spiritus, quod plerumque cum baptismate aquae conjunctum est, sit constituta . . . si . . . ab alienis [haereticis] traditum fuerit [baptisma] . . . quia Spiritus Sanctus extra Ecclesiam non sit, fides quoque non solum apud haereticos, verum etiam apud eos qui in schismate constituti sunt sana esse non possit, idcircoque paenitentiam agentibus correctisque per doctrinam veritatis et per fidem ipsorum, quae postea emendata est purificato corde eorum, tantummodo baptismate spiritali id est manus impositione episcopi et Spiritus Sancti subministratione subveniri debeat."[15]

Baptism administered in heresy then is valid; but it is useful for salvation, only when the subject becomes converted, and receives, in the Church, the complement of Baptism, that is to say, the rite which imparts the Holy Spirit. The share of the dispositions of the

baptizers as producing with Baptism but one effect, viz., the regeneration of the soul.

[13] *De rebapt.*, 3, 4.

[14] *De rebapt.*, 6, 12, etc.

[15] *De rebapt.*, 10.

baptized Christian in the reception of grace is somewhat realized. Although far more precise, the doctrine of St. Augustine will not differ from that of the *De Rebaptismate.*

* * *

The mind of the Roman Church concerning the value of the Baptism of heretics then had been made quite manifest by the attitude and answers of Pope St. Stephen. However, there was no solemn decision during the 3rd. century, and the churches kept their respective views and practice. It was only in the Council of Arles in 314, that the Catholic Church of Africa gave up rebaptism which henceforth became in the West the exclusive property of the Donatist Churches. The East was more obstinate [16]; during the 4th. and even during the 5th. century, several churches continued to look upon the Baptism of heretics as invalid. This practice influenced the theories of the efficacy of Baptism, set forth by some Greek Fathers of that time.

At Alexandria, St. Athanasius, abiding by Origen's tradition, explained the efficacy of Baptism by the power of the invocation of the three Divine Persons. But, he points out, in order that that invocation may be efficacious, one must have the true faith which it expresses. This is why the Arians do not baptize validly, although they administer Baptism in the name of the Trinity, as the Gospel commands; for, in reality, they do not baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son, but, in keeping with their belief, in the name of the Creator and of a creature.[17] The Mani-

[16] Cf. DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship,* chap. ix, sect. 5.

[17] *Contra Arianos,* ii, 42; *P.G.,* xxvi, 257. We must not lose sight of the fact that Arians would often introduce into the

cheans, the Montanists, the followers of Paul of Samosata, as well as all those who share the Arian views, administer a void Baptism, because they ascribe a false meaning to the Trinitarian formula.[18]

St. Basil, who explains also the efficacy of Baptism by the power of the Divine Persons, especially of the Holy Ghost present in the baptismal water,[19] denies likewise to heretics the power to baptize. How could heretics baptize validly since like the Marcionites[20] they make God the author of evil, or, like the Montanists,[21] insult the Holy Ghost by comparing Him to man? Did not the Bishops of old, viz., Cyprian and Firmilian, consider null any Baptism conferred outside the Church, because outside the Church the grace of the Holy Spirit cannot be found?[22] Yet, St. Basil regards as valid the Baptism of schismatics. As to ordinations, he seems to accept only those that were made by Catholics.[23]

The *Apostolic Constitutions*[24] and St. Cyril of Jerusalem[25] account for the practice of rebaptizing heretics by the doctrine of the unity of Baptism, set forth in the Epistle to the Ephesians (iv, 5). It may

baptismal formula — altered for the purpose — their divagations on the Trinitarian doctrine. Cf. TIXERONT, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

[18] *Contra Arianos*, ii, 43. The Nicene Council (can. 19) decides that the followers of Paul of Samosata ought to be rebaptized; whilst it considers as valid the Novatian ordinations (can. 8).

[19] *De Spirit. S.*, 28, 35.

[20] *Epist.*, cxcix, 47; *P.G.*, xxxii, 732.

[21] *Epist.* clxxxviii, can. 1; *Ibid.*, 668. Cf. ST. GREG. NAZ., *Oratio* xxiii *contr. Arianos*, 16.

[22] ST. BASIL, *Ibid.*

[23] *Epist.*, ccxl, 3.

[24] vi, 15 (t. i, p. 337, ed. FUNK).

[25] *Procatech.*, 7.

seem surprising that St. Cyril, who expressed so forcibly the efficacy of Baptism, did not get rid of the views that favored rebaptism. If baptismal water contains the grace of the Holy Ghost, and if it acquires, by the invocation of the Divine Persons, the power of sanctifying,[26] must not its efficacy be independent of the minister's faith? But, in the East, the respective part of the rite and of the minister in baptismal regeneration had not yet been stated with precision; the efficacy of Baptism was merely affirmed, not analyzed.

It was the introduction of the Roman practices, far more than the more accurate exposition of the doctrine that caused the custom of rebaptism to disappear from the East.[27] At the time of St. Basil, the Roman decisions were followed at Iconium.[28] In the 5th. century, the document known as the 7th. canon of Constantinople [29] divides heretical sects into two categories: those of which the Baptism is accepted, and those of which the Baptism is rejected. The principle which guided in this choice is apparently the same that had been followed by the Council of Arles in 314: heretical Baptism is valid, when administered according to the essential rite; otherwise it ought to be renewed. The practice of the Roman Church was triumphant.

Whilst the East, little inclined towards Sacramentary Theology, paid slight heed to its problems, the West, stimulated by the Donatist controversies, was about to formulate a doctrine of the efficacy of the

[26] *Catech.*, iii, 3, 4.

[27] St. Augustine remarks that the East was not affected at all by the Donatist controversies. *Contra Crescon.*, iv, 32.

[28] *Epist.* cxcix, 47.

[29] Hefele, *History of the Councils*, vol. ii, p. 366.

Sacraments, a doctrine already complete and definitive in many points.

b.— Donatism. St. Optatus and St. Augustine.

The Donatist schism was, indeed, the occasion of considerable progress of the dogma of the efficacy of the Sacraments. The share of the minister and that of the subject's dispositions, in the production of the effects of Baptism and of Ordination were determined with a precision to which the subsequent ages contributed but few immaterial additions.

* * *

On February 24, 303, Emperor Diocletian published an edict which prescribed the cessation of Christian meetings, the levelling of Churches, abjuration on the part of all Christians, and the destruction of their Sacred Books. This last injunction of the edict was executed with special rigor: Christians were required, under the most severe punishments, to surrender their Sacred Writings. Many refused to do so, thus risking their lives; others cunningly gave up heretical books; finally others obeyed and were stigmatized with the name of *traditores.*

Felix, Bishop of Aptunga, who consecrated Cæcilius, Bishop of Carthage, was charged with having surrendered the Sacred Scriptures. This charge was made use of by a faction of malcontents, which had been formed against Cæcilius at the instigation of Lucilla, an influential matron and an enemy of the new Bishop. The ordination of Cæcilius, they said, is not valid, since it was performed by a *traditor;* the Sacraments administered by sinners are void. The Bishops of Nu-

midia sided with the malcontents, they met together in a conventicle at Carthage, proclaimed the deposition of Cæcilius and elected Majorinus in his stead. The latter died a short time after his election, and was replaced by Donatus the Great. Such is the origin of the Donatist schism.[30]

On account of social as well as religious reasons this schism spread quite rapidly.[31] Although condemned in 314, at the Council of Arles,[32] it still continued to exist. At the beginning of the 5th. century all the genius of St. Augustine was required to do away with the doctrinal influence of Donatism.

The Donatist teaching concerning the minister of the Sacraments is subordinated to a puritanical conception of the Church, which is connected with Novatianism: the Church is made up only of the just; she does not admit of the mixture of the good and of the wicked, for the wicked are excluded from her bosom.[33] However on account of the special object of their contention, the Donatists limited the question to the sanctity of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: saintly ministers alone belong to that hierarchy; the *traditores* and those who, like the Catholic Bishops, side with them, cease to be its members. The true hierarchy and the true Church are found only among the Donatists.

Consequently, the Bishops notoriously unworthy[34]

[30] Cf. TILLEMONT, *Mémoires,* t. VI.

[31] Cf. *Revue des questions historiques,* 1er Oct. 1904.

[32] The 13th. canon admits the validity of the ordinations performed by *Traditores.* Cf. HEFELE, *History of the Councils,* vol. I, p. 191.

[33] ST. AUGUSTINE, *Brevic. coll.* 3a *dies,* 10.— Cf. *Donatistarum litterae, P.L.,* xliii, 834.

[34] The Donatists admitted the validity of Sacraments administered by an occult sinner.

are no longer true Bishops. They have lost the power of administering the Sacraments, and cannot either ordain or baptize validly:

"His ergo criminibus septus, esse verus episcopus non potes." [35]

The Catholics persecute the Donatists and become their tormentors; but wicked tormentors cannot be God's priests.[36] Yet, they *do* assume that title; this, however, should not cause us any wonder: does not Satan disguise himself as an angel of light?

"Nec adeo mirum, quod tibi nomen episcopi illicite assumis. Haec est vera diaboli consuetudo, ita demum decipere si sibimet vindicet vocabulum sanctitatis." [37]

But there can be no covenant between light and darkness, life and death, innocence and crime.[38] This is why the unworthy minister is excluded by this very fact from the Church and forfeits the powers of his ordination:

"Recedens ab Ecclesia baptismum quidem non amittit, jus dandi tamen amittit." [39]

Thus the existence of the hierarchy depends altogether on the moral worth of the minister.

[35] *Contra litt., Petil.*, ii, 21. The Donatist system is exposed according to the quotations from Donatist writings to be found in the works of St. Augustine and in the *De schismate Donatistarum* of St. Optatus.

[36] *Ibid.*, 42.

[37] *Ibid.*, 40.

[38] *Ibid.*, 92.

[39] *Contra epist. Parmen.*, ii, 30.

To this erroneous view about the hierarchy of the Church the Donatists added the thesis of the rebaptizers and amplified it. Nobody can give what he has not, and everything has its principle in something else. Now how can a minister laden with crimes, impart innocence to the sinner whom he baptizes? How can he who is dead give life? [40]

"Nunquam divinae legis censura patietur ut vivificare quemquam mortuus possit, curare vulneratus, illuminare caecus, vestire nudus, et mundare pollutus." [41]

The Donatists ascribed then the whole efficacy of the Sacraments to the minister's moral dispositions: it is not the baptismal rite that purifies, but the minister's state of conscience. The latter alone we must take into account:

"Conscientia namque dantis attenditur, qui abluat accipientis." [42]

Again, outside the true Church,— that is to say, the Donatist Church,— Baptism cannot exist, since neither in schism nor in heresy can forgiveness of sins and regeneration be found. [43] When one's faith is vitiated by error, he cannot receive the effects of Baptism. [44] All the reasons alleged by St. Cyprian are taken up and developed.

Finally confirming their heresies by their deeds, the

[40] *Contra litt. Petil.*, ii, 10, 12, 14. Cf. *Contr. epist. Parmen.*, ii, 27.— St. Optatus, *De schism. Donat.*, v, 4, 6.
[41] *Contra epist. Parmen.*, ii, 32.
[42] *Contra litt. Petil.*, ii, 6, 231, etc. St. Optatus, *op. cit.*, v, 7.
[43] *De bapt. contra Donat.*, i, 17.
[44] *Contra epist. Parmen.*, ii, 35.

Donatists rebaptized those that left the Catholic Church and came to them.

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St. Optatus, Bishop of Milevis, wrote his work *De Schismate Donatistarum* to refute the Donatist errors. On many points his reasoning is incomplete, and therefore does not fully reach its purpose: nevertheless, it lays down fruitful principles which St. Augustine will skilfully develop in the building up of the system which he will victoriously oppose to the false views of the schismatics.

St. Optatus grants to the Donatists that there is only one Church, that she is holy, and cannot be found either among heretics or among schismatics. But, in order to judge which is the true Church, he appeals to an objective principle. The truth and holiness of the Church rest, not on the moral qualities of her ministers, as the Donatists claim, but on the Sacraments:

"Ecclesia una est, cujus sanctitas de sacramentis colligitur, non de superbia personarum ponderatur: ergo hanc unam columbam et dilectam sponsam suam Christus appellat." [45]

The truth of the Church finds also its guaranty in her Catholicity, in the communion of all the Churches of the world with the See of Rome.[46] The characters of the true Church, by which she is distinguished from heretical and schismatical sects, are thus objective and can be easily discerned. Donatism does not possess them: hence it is not the true Church.

[45] *De schism. Donat.*, ii, 1.
[46] *Ibid.*, 1, 2, 3.

Besides, since the Sacraments are at the basis of that conception of the Church, and since, on the other hand, the Donatists ascribe to them no intrinsic value, St. Optatus proves forcibly the Catholic thesis of their efficacy.

He states the problem with remarkable precision. In the administration of Baptism, he says, we must distinguish the invocation of the Trinity, the faith of the baptized neophyte, and the person of the minister; however, their respective action is not equally important.

The chief part belongs to the Trinity,[47] for from it Baptism draws all its efficacy, and not from the minister: it is God that purifies the soul and imparts His gifts. Hence the Sacraments are holy by themselves, they do not hold their sanctity from the minister, as the Donatists claim. It is God, and not the minister, that sanctifies in Baptism:

"Cum ergo videatis, omnes qui baptizant, operarios esse, non dominos et sacramenta per se esse sancta, non per homines, quid est, quod vobis tantum vindicatis? . . . Dei est mundare, non hominis." [48]

The minister's share, then, is quite secondary; it is merely *ministerial;* it is like that of a workman (operarius) who may be changed and replaced at will: the baptismal rite alone cannot be changed. St. Optatus is in full harmony with the tradition of Pope St. Stephen. However, his teaching is far from being as

[47] *De schism. Donat.,* v, 4: Principalem locum Trinitas possidet, sine qua res ipsa non potest geri: hanc sequitur fides credentis: jam persona operantis vicina est, quae simili auctoritate esse non potest.

[48] *De schism. Donat.,* v, 4, 2, 7. Cf. ii, 10.

complete as that of St. Augustine. The Bishop of Milevis failed to grasp the doctrine of the character.

That incompleteness is felt, especially when he attempts to state with accuracy the action of the faith of the baptized candidate, in the production of grace. Not only is that faith declared necessary, but its efficacy is somewhat exaggerated. That faith is compared to the faith of the woman with a flow of blood, mentioned in the Gospel, which, according to Jesus Himself, wrought the cure by itself, and to the faith of the centurion which brought about by itself the cure of the servant.[49] True, the sacramental doctrine of St. Optatus, taken as a whole, forbids us to see, in those comparisons, a restriction of the objective efficacy of Baptism. Yet it must be confessed that they state in a rather confused manner the part assigned to the dispositions of the subject: a point on which St. Augustine will show far more precision.

*
* *

The whole sacramental teaching of St. Augustine is based both on St. Cyprian's concept of the Church, and on the doctrine of the character. Like St. Cyprian and the Donatists, St. Augustine admits that, outside the true Church, forgiveness of sins and grace cannot be obtained. But with Pope St. Stephen and St. Optatus, he defends the objective efficacy of the Sacraments. The doctrine of the character enables him to reconcile these two parts of his system and to harmonize, in a synthetic system, his theology of the Church with that of the Sacraments.

As a matter of fact, the objective efficacy of the Sacraments, independent of the minister's faith and

[49] *De schism. Donat.*, v, 8.

moral works, is emphatically affirmed by St. Augustine.[50]

The Donatists claimed that an heretical or unworthy minister cannot either baptize or ordain validly, for by his falls he has forfeited the powers of his Ordination. No, answers St. Augustine, an heretical or unworthy minister does not forfeit his powers. Why should he forfeit the powers of his Ordination when he does not forfeit his Baptism? Now, the Donatists themselves admit that neither heresy nor unworthiness deprive of Baptism, a man who has received it validly, since they do not rebaptize those apostates who are converted, but simply submit them to Penance. Hence an heretical or unworthy minister confers the Sacraments in a valid, though unlawful, manner.[51]

In order to prove the permanence of Ordination as well as that of Baptism in an unworthy minister, St. Augustine appeals to the doctrine of the "character." Baptism and Ordination cannot be lost through moral failings, for they produce a lasting effect, a "character" which cannot be lost and does not allow of these Sacraments being repeated.[52]

"Nulla ostenditur causa cur ille qui ipsum baptismum amittere non potest, jus dandi potest amittere. Utrumque enim sacramentum est; et quadam consecratione utrumque homini datur; illud cum baptizatur; istud cum ordinatur; ideoque in Catholica utrumque non licet iterari."[53]

[50] Cf. PORTALIÉ, *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique,* "Saint Augustin," i, 2416, ss.

[51] *Contr. epist. Parmen.,* ii, 27, 28.

[52] St. Augustine calls the sacrament of Ordination "jus dandi baptismum." In the *Sermo ad Caesareensis Ecclesiae plebem,* 2, he compares it to the indelible "character" of the soldier deserter.

[53] *Contr. epist. Parmen.,* ii, 28. Cf. ii, 30; *Contr. Crescon.,* ii, 12–14.

In fact, it is the constant practice of the Church both not to reordain those apostate ministers who come back to the one fold, nor to rebaptize the heretic who becomes a convert: an excellent proof that Baptism and Ordination leave in the soul indelible traces:

"Sacramentum enim baptismi est quod habet qui baptizatur: et sacramentum dandi baptismi est quod habet qui ordinatur. Sicut autem baptizatus, si ab unitate recesserit, sacramentum baptismi non amittit; sic etiam ordinatus, si ab unitate recesserit, sacramentum dandi baptismi non amittit. Nulli enim sacramento injuria facienda est; si discedit a malis, utrumque discedit; si permanet in malis, utrumque permanet. Sicut ergo acceptatur baptismus, quem non potuit amittere qui ab unitate discesserat; sic acceptandus est baptismus, quem dedit ille qui sacramentum dandi cum discederet non amiserat. Nam sicut redeuntes, qui priusquam recederent baptizati sunt, non rebaptizantur: ita redeuntes, qui priusquam recederent ordinati sunt, non utique rursus ordinantur; sed aut administrant quod administrabant, si hoc utilitas Ecclesiae postulat, aut si non administrant, sacramentum ordinationis suae tamen gerunt." [54]

If heretical or unworthy ministers can validly administer the Sacraments, it does not follow, St. Augustine continues, that they administer them lawfully. Baptism may be administered validly outside the unity of the Church; but that administration is unlawful and injurious both to the minister and to the subject of the sacrament. Heretical ministers sin grievously when they confer Baptism, almost as grievously as a layman who would baptize outside the case of necessity and thus usurp priestly functions.[55]

[54] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 2. Cf. *De bono conjug.*, 32.
[55] *Contr. epist. Parmen.*, ii, 28, 29; *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, 1, 2.

However, St. Augustine adds immediately that the illegitimacy of heretical administration takes nothing from its value:

"Si dicis: Non recte datur, respondemus: Sicut non recte foris habetur, et tamen habetur; sic non recte foris datur, sed tamen datur." [56]

Just as the royal effigy engraven illegitimately on coins by a forger will be made authentic by the public treasury, after they have been confiscated, or just as the military mark impressed unlawfully on a man foreign to the army, will cause that man to be considered a deserter, when his military mark is seen, and will be valid, in case that civilian would join the army, so also, the Baptism administered by an unlawful minister is valid and must not be repeated. The Christian Sacraments adhere to the soul as closely as the military mark to the body.[57]

Thus for St. Augustine, the validity of the Sacraments is independent of the minister's moral dispositions, since it is connected with the latter's indelible "character."

But how account for the fact that a sacrament can be valid, when it is conferred by heretics or by persons laden with all kinds of crimes? As our readers remember, Pope St. Stephen solved that antinomy by appealing to the power of the invocation of the Trinity in Baptism; St. Optatus declared that man's action in the conferring of a Sacrament is merely ministerial; God it is who really acts. St. Augustine takes up these explanations and states them with more accuracy

[56] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 2; iii, 13, etc.
[57] *Contr. epist. Parmen.*, ii, 29.

by means of his theory of the Church, which is thus intimately connected with his sacramental doctrine.

According to the holy Doctor, the Church is the instrument of salvation; through her, by submitting to her authority, man can reach the knowledge of revealed truth; it is also through her mediation that grace is given us. Hence the Church continues here below the work of teaching and of sanctification, formerly performed by Christ; or rather through His Church Christ continues to teach and sanctify the world: so that the acts of the Church are really those of Christ Himself.[58] Now the Church acts through her ministers, through those who have received the "character" of Ordination, and who are thus officially invested with the power of exercising the sacred functions.

The consequence of this doctrine is that the act of the minister who confers a sacrament is an act of Christ Himself acting through His Church. Therefore how could the heresy and unworthiness of the minister impair the value of the sacrament?

St. Augustine sets forth that teaching over and over again, not only in his writings against the Donatists, but at every opportunity:

"Secura Ecclesia spem non ponit in homine . . . sed spem suam ponit in Christo, qui sic accepit formam servi, ut non amitteret formam Dei, de quo dictum est: *Ipse est qui baptizat.* Proinde homo quilibet minister baptismi ejus, qualemcumque sarcinam portet, non iste, sed super quem columba descendit, ipse est qui baptizat." [59]

[58] Cf. *Epist.* cxl, 18; *Sermo* cxxix, 4; *De doctrina Christ.*, iii, 44; *Enarr. II* in Ps. xxx, n. 4, etc.

[59] *Epistola* lxxxix, 5.

That the minister should be holy, this is indeed quite proper. But if he happens not to be holy, Christ's sacrament is not tainted on that account; for the Savior can make use of a despicable channel of stone to carry the waters of salvation into the soul.[60] According to the Gospel, Christ baptized through the ministry of Judas, the traitor, and that Baptism was valid. Hence we should not feel uneasy at the unworthiness of the ministers of the Church, but rather consider in them Christ who is acting:

"Dictum est de Domino antequam pateretur, quia baptizabat plures quam Joannes: deinde adjunctum est, *quamvis ipse non baptizaret, sed discipuli ejus* (*Joan.*, IV, 1, 2). Ipse et non ipse: ipse potestate, illi ministerio; servitutem ad baptizandum illi admovebant, potestas baptizandi in Christo permanebat. Ergo baptizabant discipuli ejus, et ibi adhuc erat Judas inter discipulos ejus: quos ergo baptizavit Judas non sunt iterum baptizati; et quos baptizavit Joannes, iterum baptizati sunt. Plane iterum, sed non iterato baptismo. Quos enim baptizavit Joannes, Joannes baptizavit: quos autem baptizavit Judas, Christus baptizavit. Sic ergo quos baptizavit ebriosus, quos baptizavit homicida, quos baptizavit adulter, si baptismus Christi erat, Christus baptizavit. Non timeo adulterum, non ebriosum, non homicidam; quia columbam attendo, per quam mihi dicitur: *Hic est qui baptizat.*"[61]

If the administration of Baptism is an act of Christ acting through His Church in the person of the minister invested with the character, the value and sanctity of the sacrament are intrinsic to it: neither the unworthiness of the minister nor that of the subject can impair it in any way:

[60] *In Joan.*, tract. v, 15.
[61] *In Joan.*, tract. v, 18; *Contra litt. Petil.*, iii, 59, 65–67.

"Non eorum meritis a quibus ministratur, nec eorum quibus ministratur, constat baptismus, sed propria sanctitate atque veritate propter eum a quo institutus est, bene utentibus ad salutem." [62]

Man's action is purely ministerial: he uses the very power of Christ. Hence we ought to pay attention not to the minister's person, like the Donatists, but to what is given by the minister:

"In ista quaestione de baptismo non esse cogitandum quis det, sed quid det; aut quis accipiat, sed quid accipiat; aut quis habeat, sed quid habeat." [63]

By his doctrine of the ministerial action of the Church in the administration of the Sacraments — a doctrine based on the continuance of priestly powers in an heretical or unworthy minister — St. Augustine was able to reconcile St. Cyprian's theology of the Church with the objective efficacy of the Sacraments. Christ acts through an heretical or unworthy minister, for, by his character, the latter represents the Church.[64]

Nothing then on the *minister's* part impairs in any way the validity of the sacrament; it suffices that the minister performs the sacrament according to the essential rite.

Is this also the case with the *subject?* Are not his evil dispositions, for instance heresy, schismatic tendencies or attachment to sin, an absolute obstacle to the efficacy of the sacrament?

As we have already seen, St. Cyprian, and the Donatists as well, refused to admit that Baptism was valid,

[62] *Contra Cresc.*, iv, 19. Cf. *De bapt., contra Donat.*, iii, 15.
[63] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, iv, 16.
[64] Cf. *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 14.

when received by a heretic or by an unworthy person, who was incapable of obtaining the forgiveness of his sins and of being regenerated. The author of the *De Rebaptismate* thought that in this case, Baptism began the regeneration, and therefore was valid, although the regeneration was complete and profitable for salvation, only when the subject was converted and received, in the Catholic Church, the rite that conferred the Holy Ghost. St. Augustine is more precise. He solves the difficulty by the distinction between grace and character. When an heretical subject is baptized in an heretical sect, he receives the character: his Baptism is valid and must not be repeated; nevertheless he will obtain the forgiveness of his sins only when he is converted and enters the Catholic Church.

The heretical minister who baptizes in his own sect is like a soldier who, after deserting, marks with the "royal character" a man foreign to the army. When the deserter comes back to his duty, and when he who is illegally marked enlists in the army — to which he did not belong — their "character" is not renewed, it is simply acknowledged and approved.[65] When the shepherd recognizes his wandering sheep at the sign with which he marked them, he makes them come back to the sheepfold, without touching in any way the "character dominicus" he had impressed on them.[66] So also Baptism, received outside the Church by an heretical or schismatical subject or by one who is animated by the worst dispositions, always confers validly the character, for the latter, to be produced, requires no disposition:

[65] *Epist.* clxxxv, 23. Cf. *In Joan.*, tract. vi, 14–16.
[66] *Ibid.* Cf. *Sermo* ccxcv, 5; *Contr. Crescon.*, i, 35.

"Christiani baptismi sacramentum . . . etiam apud haereticos valet et sufficit ad consecrationem, quamvis ad vitae aeternae participationem non sufficiat; quae consecratio reum quidem facit haereticum extra Domini gregem habentem dominicum characterem, corrigendum tamen admonet sana doctrina, non iterum similiter consecrandum." [67]

Hence Baptism received in heresy produces the character; but it does not suffice to make a man share in the eternal life. St. Augustine gave out his whole mind concerning the value of the Baptism of heretics for producing grace.[68] His views must be exposed with accuracy: this will enable us to detect the shortcomings of the Augustinian doctrine about the efficacy of the Sacraments.

St. Augustine, who parts company with St. Cyprian when he affirms the validity of the Baptism administered in an heretical sect, acknowledges with him the inutility of that Baptism for salvation. Such a Baptism does not remit sins, nor impart grace:

"Nec nos abnuimus eum qui apud haereticos vel in aliquo schismate extra communionem Ecclesiae baptizatur, non ei prodesse in quantum haereticorum perversitati consentit." [69]

The sacrament will produce all its effects, when the heretic is converted and comes back to the Catholic unity, just as Baptism, administered in the Church to a subject not properly disposed, produces grace, when he does penance.

[67] *Epist.* xcviii, 5.

[68] St. Augustine did not make known his idea about the grace-producing power of Ordination. He considered but one effect of the sacrament of Holy Orders, the imperishable prerogatives which it confers.

[69] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, iii, 13.

"In communionibus ab Ecclesia separatis posse homines baptizari, ubi Christi baptismus eadem sacramenti celebratione datur et sumitur; qui tamen tunc prosit ad remissionem peccatorum, cum quis reconciliatus unitati, sacrilegio dissensionis exuitur quo ejus peccata tenebantur, et dimitti non sinebantur. Sicut enim in illo qui fictus accesserat, fit ut non denuo baptizetur, sed ipsa pia correctione et veraci confessione purgetur, quod non posset sine baptismo, ut quod ante datum est, tunc valere incipiat ad salutem, cum illa fictio veraci confessione recesserit." [70]

St. Augustine finds the explanation of this phenomenon, in the wicked dispositions of a heretical subject. He who allows himself to be baptized in heresy or schism, "connives with heretical wickedness," makes himself guilty of the "sacrilege of discord" and places an "obstacle to the producing of the salutary fruits of the sacrament." [71] In this case, Baptism can no more remit sins and impart grace, than it can, even in the Catholic Church, forgive sins and impart grace to him who is baptized therein without being sincerely converted.

The Bishop of Hippo states with wonderful accuracy the share which belongs to the dispositions of the subject of the sacrament. He who is destitute of them "places an obstacle (obicem ponit)" to the action of the sacrament. The Council of Trent will use the same words in order to express the influence of the subject's dispositions in the production of grace.[72]

[70] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 18. Cf. 5, 11, 12, etc.

[71] *Epist.* xcviii, 10: Qui non credit . . . profecto infidelis est, etsi habeat fidei sacramentum; longeque melior est illo parvulus, qui etiamsi fidem nondum habet in cogitatione, non ei obicem opponit contrariae cogitationis, unde sacramentum ejus salubriter percipit.

[72] *Sess.* VII, *De sacramentis in genere*, can. 6.

But when the subject, that has been baptized in an heretical or even schismatical sect, acknowledges his heresy, is converted and re-enters the Church, then his Baptism begins to be useful and advantageous to him.

"Sicut autem per unitatis reconciliationem incipit utiliter haberi [Baptisma], quod extra unitatem inutiliter habebatur; sic per eamdem reconciliationem incipit utile esse, quod extra eam inutiliter datum est."[73]

In this case the Baptism "revives"; future theologians will base on that Augustinian teaching the theory of the reviviscence of the Sacraments.

According to St. Augustine, then, the first and chief, but not the only, cause that hinders the sacrament, conferred outside the Catholic unity, from being profitable, is the subject's evil dispositions.

Moreover, if the heretical or schismatical Baptism is of no profit, it is, after all, because the true Church alone is the organ of salvation,[74] and because outside her bosom sins cannot be forgiven. In fact, to the true Church, and to her alone, in the person of the Apostles, Christ gave the power of remitting sin; hence

"Pax Ecclesiae dimittit peccata, et ab Ecclesiae pace alienatio tenet peccata."

It is the "cooings of the dove," that is to say, the prayers of the Church, that obtain the forgiveness of sins. Now the dove cooes only in behalf of those who are at peace with her.[75] Or again, it is charity which covers

[73] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 2. Cf. 18.

[74] *De bapt. cont. Donat.*, iv, 1: Baptismus Ecclesiæ potest esse extra Ecclesiam, munus autem beatae vitae non nisi intra Ecclesiam reperitur; quae super petram etiam fundata est, quae ligandi et solvendi claves accepit.

[75] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, iii, 23, 22.

a multitude of sins, it is by the Holy Spirit that they are forgiven; now charity and the Holy Spirit are found only in the Catholic unity.[76] This is why all the good that may be obtained, outside the Church, is unprofitable to salvation, for, as St. Cyprian says: "Salus extra Ecclesiam nulla est." [77] Although good and heard by God, the prayers and alms of Cornelius the centurion were of profit for his salvation, only after he had been incorporated by St. Peter into the Christian society of the Church.[78]

Is not the efficacy of the Sacraments somewhat diminished by that doctrine concerning the Church, a doctrine which is exactly that of St. Cyprian? St. Augustine has some misgivings about it.[79] Hence in order to preserve the full efficacy of the Sacraments, without, however, keeping anything from the action of the Church in the imparting of salvation, the holy Doctor appeals to the peculiar hypothesis of the reviviscence of sins. Baptism received in an heretical or schismatical sect, may remit sins for a while, but if the subject is bent on remaining in heresy or schism, all his sins will revive and he will obtain their "irrevocable remission" only when he becomes reconciled with the Catholic unity.[80] As a matter of fact, the Savior assures us in the parable of the unmerciful servant, that sins revive, when brotherly charity is absent.

[76] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, iii, 21; *Sermo* lxxi, 30, 33.
[77] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, iv, 24.
[78] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 10.
[79] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 16.
[80] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 18–21; iii, 18; v, 9. Theologians of the Middle Ages, impressed by this Augustinian doctrine, will ask themselves: *Utrum peccata dimissa redeant?* and answer the problem in the negative. Cf. the *Epitome* of ABELARD, 28; ROLAND, *Sent.* (GIETL, p. 249).

"Nam redire dimissa peccata, ubi fraterna charitas non est, apertissime Dominus docet de illo servo, quem cum invenisset debitorem decem millium talentorum, deprecanti omnia dimisit. Ille autem conservum suum qui ei debebat centum denarios, cum miseratus non fuisset, jussit eum dominus reddere quae ei dimiserat." [81]

That reviviscence of sin takes place likewise in the Catholic Church when the subject of Baptism is insufficiently disposed at the time he receives the sacrament.

As we see from what precedes, St. Augustine did not ascribe to Baptism an efficacy altogether independent of the Church, and therefore did not keep clear altogether of St. Cyprian's views. The holy Doctor even hesitates to affirm that the sacrament can fully forgive the sins of a schismatic or of a heretic in good faith, who would not be in danger of death.

Those, he says, who believe that Donatism is the true Church, and have themselves baptized therein, are, no doubt, less guilty than those who would act thus by malice. Yet they are "wounded by the sacrilege of schism":

"Illi vero qui per ignorantiam ibi baptizantur, arbitrantes ipsam esse Ecclesiam Christi, in istorum quidem comparatione minus peccant; sacrilegio tamen schismatis vulnerantur: non ideo non graviter, quod alii gravius. Cum enim dictum est quibusdam: *Tolerabilius erit Sodomis in die judicii quam vobis* (*Matt.*, XI, 24): non ideo dictum est quia Sodomitae non torquebuntur, sed quia illi gravius torquebuntur." [82]

Had St. Augustine considered the efficacy of Bap-

[81] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 20.

[82] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 6, 10, 11; Cf. *Contr. Crescon.*, i, 34; *Sermo* lxxi, 28.

tism in the production of grace to be independent of the Church,[83] he would not have used these expressions. According to him, it is not the rite that produces grace, it is God who imparts it to the subject of the sacrament, and that imparting takes place in the true Church. The conception of a relation of causality strictly so called between the sacramental rite and grace is altogether beyond the holy Doctor's horizon. Hence, while the Augustinian doctrine sets forth with wonderful precision the share of the minister and that of the subject's dispositions in the production of grace, this is not the case for the share of the rite itself. In this regard, its shortcoming is manifest: a considerable progress was still necessary for the full development of the dogma of efficacy.

To sum up, according to St. Augustine, Baptism and Ordination are efficacious independently of the minister's moral dispositions; for the power of administering the Sacraments cannot be lost. That power is the power of Christ Himself who acts through His Church in the person of the minister. The whole function of the minister, in the making of the Sacraments, consists, then, in performing the rite according to its essential forms.

The subject's moral dispositions are not necessary for the validity of Baptism and Ordination, that is to say, for the production of the character. However, the beneficial effects of Baptism are not obtained, when these dispositions are missing. That the subject, baptized in heresy or schism, may obtain "the

[83] St. Augustine grants, however, that Baptism received in an heretical or schismatical sect by a person in good faith and *in danger of death* is profitable for salvation. *De bapt. contra Donat.*, vii, 100.

irrevocable remission" of his sins, he must be reconciled with the Catholic Church. As to the subject who received "fictitiously" Baptism in the true Church, he will obtain the forgiveness of his sins, when he is converted.

Hence the sacramental rite is efficacious objectively: it is an act of Christ acting through His Church. This lofty conception of a sacrament will later on influence considerably the Christian mind. Yet, it must be acknowledged that the Bishop of Hippo did not sufficiently distinguish the efficacy of the rite from the action of the Church in the bestowal of grace.

When St. Augustine formulated that doctrine of the efficacy, he had in view exclusively Baptism and Ordination, which alone came up for consideration in the Donatist controversies. It is only later on that the Augustinian doctrine was applied to all the Sacraments. Although less precise, the views of the holy Doctor on the efficacy of the other Sacraments deserve also our attention; the more so that they are influenced to some extent by his doctrinal position against the Donatists.

The unction which follows Baptism, the *"sacramentum chrismatis"* has the power of imparting the Holy Ghost and, together with the other Sacraments, of preparing the Christian to bear all kinds of trials.[84]

The Eucharist is valid notwithstanding the unworthiness of the minister [85] and that of the subject, although the latter, if not properly disposed, whilst participating, like Judas, in Christ's Body and Blood, does not receive salvation:

[84] *Contr. litt. Petil.*, ii, 230; *In I Joan.*, iii, 5; *Contr. Faust.*, xix, cap. xiv.

[85] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, v, 28.

"Sicut enim Judas, cui buccellam tradidit Dominus, non malum accipiendo, sed male accipiendo locum in se diabolo praebuit; sic indigne quisque sumens dominicum sacramentum non efficit ut quia ipse malus est, malum sit, aut quia non ad salutem accepit, nihil acceperit. Corpus enim Domini et sanguis Domini nihilominus erat etiam illis quibus dicebat Apostolus: *Qui manducat indigne, judicium sibi manducat et bibit.*" [86]

Thus the Christian Sacraments, especially Baptism and the Eucharist, possess a far greater efficacy than that of the Sacraments of old. The latter were looked upon by St. Augustine as rites only figurative, destined to announce Christ and to recall to men the Divine promises, whilst the Christian Sacraments give salvation:

"Alia sunt sacramenta dantia salutem, alia promittentia Salvatorem. Sacramenta Novi Testamenti dant salutem; sacramenta Veteris Testamenti promiserunt Salvatorem. . . . Mutata sunt sacramenta; facta sunt faciliora, pauciora, salubriora, feliciora." [87]

When Christ, announced by the figurative rites of the Jews, came, He did away with the Sacraments of old and established others that are far more efficacious and will last until the end of time.[88] Christ's Sacraments then are superior to the Mosaic rites by their purpose, their effects and their duration. St. Augustine does not state accurately the great difference between the Sacraments of the New and those of the Old Law as regards their respective efficacy. However, mediæval theologians will build up on his teaching the

[86] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, v, 9. Cf. *Sermo* lxxi, 17.
[87] *Enarr. in psal.* lxxiii, 2.
[88] *Contr. Faust.*, xix, cap. xiii.

antithesis by means of which they will set forth the efficacy *ex opere operato* peculiar to the Sacraments of Christianity, and oppose it to the efficacy *ex opere operantis* of the Jewish rites.

Concerning Penance, St. Augustine attempted to state with precision the object and the efficacy of the intervention of the Church, in the forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism. St. Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona, in his *Letters to Sempronius,* and St. Ambrose, in his treatise *De paenitentia* had proved to the Novatians, by means of Scripture, the Divine institution of the power of the Church to forgive all sins. But neither of them had accounted for the efficacy of that power. However, St. Ambrose had seen in the resurrection of Lazarus the image of the sinner's justification through Penance. The word *Veni foras* prescribes the confession of sins; and the disciples' intervention in unloosing Lazarus risen from the dead, represents the action of the Church in the work of the sinner's justification.[89] St. Augustine took up this explanation, and stated it more accurately. When the sinner confesses his sins, he is already arisen from the dead, he comes outside, as Lazarus came out of the grave at the call of Christ:

"Qui confitetur foras prodit. Foras prodire non posset, nisi viveret: vivere non posset nisi resuscitatus esset."[90]

The function of the Church consists in setting the risen sinner free from his bonds, just as the Apostles loosed the bandages of Lazarus after his resurrection:

[89] *De paenit.,* ii, 54–58.

[90] *Sermo* lxvii, 2. Cf. TURMEL, *Hist. de la théol. posit.,* liv. I, 1re partie, ch. xii.

"Quid ergo facit Ecclesia, cui dictum est: *Quae solveritis, soluta erunt,* nisi quod ait Dominus continuo ad discipulos: *Solvite illum et sinite abire?*" [91]

This vague teaching about the efficacy of absolution had its echo in the early part of the Middle Ages. It was adopted by St. Gregory the Great,[92] and is still found, with a few modifications, in Peter Lombard. It is accounted for by the fact that the constitutive elements of the sacrament of Penance were not sufficiently analyzed, a defect which characterizes the Patristic age. Perhaps we may see in it a misapplication of the Augustinian doctrine on the efficacy of the Sacraments. As we have seen, in order to make the virtue of Baptism altogether independent of the minister's unworthiness, St. Augustine constantly affirms that it is God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit, that forgives sins and imparts grace, when the rite is performed. Likewise it is God that forgives the sins of the Christian who submits to canonical penance. The efficacy of the absolution of the Church in that remission of sins is left in the background, until the development of the doctrine assigns to it its true place.[93]

Another development will be needed also to render the Christian mind conscious of all the efficacy of marriage. According to St. Augustine, Christian Marriage has for its effect the unique and indissoluble bond

[91] *Sermo* lxvii, 3; Cf. *Sermo* xcviii, 6; ccxcv, 2; ccclii, 8.

[92] *Homil.* xxvi, 6.

[93] In the 13th. century, St. Thomas teaches very explicitly that the absolution effects the remission of sins. *IV Sent.,* dist. XVIII, qu. i, art. 3; *Sum. theol,* 3ª p., q. LXXXIV, art. 3.

which typifies the union of Christ with His Church.[94] That bond is undoubtedly most holy, because of the excellence of its symbolism; hence it ought never to be broken.[95] Likewise the sanctity of the marriage-bond forbids polygamy:

"In nostrarum quippe nuptiis plus valet sanctitas sacramenti quam fecunditas uteri." [96]

Nay, a bigamist is excluded from the episcopal ordination, for he has lost the "*norma sacramenti,*" since the sacramental symbolism of marriage can truly exist, only in the union of one man and of one woman.[97] Thus, according to St. Augustine, the matrimonial bond is a most holy symbol, which places the couple in a state of holiness calling for special duties. However, marriage is not looked upon as a source, properly so called, of grace, as a sacrament in the modern meaning of the word.[98]

But we cannot claim to find in St. Augustine's writings the sacramentary theology completely evolved. The holy Doctor's contribution, though incomplete, is most important; it will direct the thought of the mediæval authors towards the definitive explanations.

Up to that time, no Patristic writer had studied from a speculative point of view the efficacy of the anointing of the sick. The letter of Pope Innocent I to the

[94] *De bono conjug.*, 21.
[95] *De bono conjug.*, 32.
[96] *De bono conjug.*, 21.
[97] *De bono conjug.*, 21.
[98] Cf. De Smedt, *Principes de la critique historique,* Liège, 1883, pp. 111–115. St. Thomas showed clearly the power of producing grace which is in Christian Marriage. *In IV Sent.,* Dist. XXVI, q. II, art. 3.

Bishop of Eugubium, Decentius, contains some definite details concerning the minister and the subject of these unctions. As to the effects, it simply repeats the description made of them in the Epistle of St. James.

A century later, St. Cæsarius of Arles regards these unctions as a means of bodily cure and forgiveness of sins, which he opposes to the magical medical treatment, quite customary among his people.[99] But the unctions spoken of by the Bishop of Arles are those which the faithful traced on themselves in their sickness, with oil that had been blessed. St. Cæsarius does not mention the unctions made by priests. It is a well known fact that formerly the faithful were wont to anoint themselves with sacred oil, to obtain their cure. St. Genevieve of Paris is said to have thus healed many sick. Differently from Cæsarius, Pope Innocent I distinguished the unctions that were made by the ordinary faithful, from those performed by bishops and priests. The writers of the following centuries will emphasize that distinction; and, during

[99] *App. Sermo* cclxv, 3; *P.L.* xxxix, 2238–2239: Quoties aliqua infirmitas supervenerit, corpus et sanguinem Christi ille qui aegrotat accipiat; et inde corpusculum suum ungat; ut illud quod scriptum est impleatur in eo: "Infirmatur aliquis . . ." (*Jac.*, v, 14–15). Videte, fratres, quia, qui in infirmitate ad ecclesiam cucurrerit, et corporis sanitatem recipere et peccatorum indulgentiam merebitur obtinere. Cum ergo duplicia bona possint in ecclesia inveniri quare per praecantatores, per fontes et arbores et diabolica phylacteria, per characteres et aruspices et divinos vel sortilegos multiplicia sibi mala miseri homines conantur inferre? Cf. *App. Sermo* cclxxix, 5; *Ibid.*, 2273. These unctions are made in the church, after the distribution of the Eucharist. The bodily cure and the remission of sins are attributed to the anointing, not to the Eucharist, since St. Caesarius bases his teaching on the text of St. James.— P. Lejay explained these extracts from St. Caesarius' sermons, in the *Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature religicuses,* t. x, pp. 606–610.

the 12th. century, Hugh of St. Victor,[1] Peter Lombard,[2] Roland,[3] and the other theologians will have in view only the unctions made by priests, when they teach that the "sacrament of the anointing of the sick was instituted to forgive their sins and alleviate their bodily pains."

When synthetical studies of the Sacraments were made, the mode of efficacy of the anointing of the sick was compared to the mode of efficacy of the other Sacraments.

§ V. *The Efficacy of the Sacraments in the Early Part of the Middle Ages — Reordinations — The Sacraments Administered by those that are Excommunicated — The Heresies of the 12th. Century.*

Although defeated by St. Augustine, Donatism had not been destroyed. No definition of the Church[4] came to sanction the Augustinian doctrine and brand Donatism with the note of heresy. The Pelagian errors concerning original sin and those of Nestorius about the Incarnation absorbed the whole attention of the Catholic mind. The absence of definition on the part of the Church explains the revivals of the Donatist teaching, and the attacks it made against the Augustinian doctrine during the early part of the Middle Ages.

[1] *De sacramentis,* lib. II, pars xv, 2.

[2] *Sentent.,* IV, Dist. XXIII, 2.

[3] Gietl, *Die Sentenzen Rolands,* pp. 261–264: A solis sacerdotibus et episcopis tradi debet [unctionis olei sacramentum].

[4] The Council of Arles had not formulated any doctrinal definition against Donatism, but simply declared the ordinations made by *traditores* to be valid and forbade rebaptizing. It is the Council of Trent which defined the anti-donatist doctrine. *Sess. vii, De sacram in genere,* can. 12; *De Bapt.,* can. 4.

In the West, until the 8th. century, St. Augustine's principles were faithfully followed. The 3rd. Council of Carthage in 397 [5] renews the ancient prescription not to rebaptize nor to reordain. Pope St. Leo styles Donatists those who repeat ordinations.[6] However, Innocent I rejects apparently the ordinations made by the Arians:

"Arianos praeterea, ceterasque hujusmodi pestes . . . non videtur clericos eorum cum sacerdotii aut ministerii cujuspiam recipi debere dignitate, quoniam quibus solum baptisma ratum esse permittimus." [7]

This obscure text of Pope Innocent I will puzzle many an author during the 11th. century.

After the 8th. century, reordinations became now and then a weapon used both by the friends and by the enemies of the Church. The ordinations made by the intruded Pope Constantine in 767 were probably declared null. At all events, it is certain that Pope Sergius III (904-911), yielding to a sentiment of mean revenge, had the ordinations made by Pope Formosus repeated.[8]

The East witnessed also similar facts. In the 6th. century, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Joannes Scholasticus, prescribed that the Monophysite clerics that might be converted to the Catholic Church, should be ordained again.[9]

[5] Can. 38, BRUNS, *Concilia*, t. i, p. 128.

[6] *Epist.* xii, 6; cf. *Epist.* clxvii, 1.

[7] *Innocentii Romani Pontif. espist. XXIV ad Alex. Antioch.*, 4. J. MORIN, *De sacris Ecclesiae ordinationibus*, p. III, exerc. v, c. vii, 6, thinks that Innocent I declares invalid the ordinations conferred by Arians. Mgr. Many rejects that interpretation. *De Sacra Ordinatione*, p. 64.

[8] MORIN, *Ibid.*, cap. iii; MANY, pp. 70–72.

[9] MANY, p. 65. The question of reordinations will be treated

These facts, some of which are beyond doubt, show the persistence of the Donatist doctrine. However, the Augustinian thesis had always some upholders; the episode concerning Pope Formosus determined many to take up its defense.[10] Another conflict between the two doctrines thus became unavoidable. It did arise, during the 11th. century, on occasion of the many excommunications pronounced against simoniac and incontinent clerics.

The moral state of the clergy in the 11th. century was indeed deplorable. The law of clerical celibacy had become a dead letter; and all the ecclesiastical offices in Germany, Italy, and Gaul were sold for money. Incontinence and simony were the two plagues with which the clergy was afflicted and of which it had to be cured at any cost.

The reform was started by St. Leo IX (1048–1054) and vigorously continued by St. Gregory VII (1073–1085). Incontinents and simoniacs were anathematized; the faithful were expressly forbidden to have recourse to excommunicated ministers, for the reception of the Sacraments.[11] Nevertheless, these unworthy men continued to ordain and to administer the other Sacraments. Then it was that the painful question came up to the minds of the faithful, as to the value of the Sacraments conferred by bishops and by priests excluded from the bosom of the Church, and generally by any unworthy minister.

at length in the next chapter in connection with the character. Cf. also L. SALTET, *Les Réordinations,* Paris, 1907 [Tr.].

[10] VULGARIUS, *De causa Formosiana* (*ed.* DÜMMLER); AUXILIUS, *Infensor et defensor; P.L.,* cxxix.

[11] Cf. J. PEYRET, *Bernold de Constance,* a thesis for the degree of doctor in theology, presented at Lyons in 1904, pp. 93 ff.

Many were the solutions given to the problem; their variety indicates a great intellectual uncertainty and confusion and shows how much precision was still wanting in the dogma of the efficacy of the Sacraments.

Quite naturally, the supporters of the reform and the friends of the Papacy [12] were not slow to declare null the Sacraments administered by excommunicated ministers. On the contrary the opponents of the reform [13] preferred the Augustinian thesis and used it as a weapon to fight their adversaries. However, St. Augustine's doctrine was also defended by some most devoted champions of the Roman Church, as Peter Damian,[14] for instance. Others took up intermediary positions and taught that the Sacraments of excommunicated ministers produced grace, although the effect of that grace was neutralized and became useless to the faithful.[15] Finally, some authors like Bernold

[12] Gui of Arezzo, *Monumenta Germaniae Lib.*, t. i, p. 6; Humbert, *Ibid.*, p. 100; Bernard, *Ibid.*, t. ii, p. 28.

[13] Sigebert, *M. G. Lib.*, t. ii, p. 439; Wenrich of Treves, *Ibid.*, t. i, p. 298; Guibert, *Ibid.*, p. 623.

[14] *Opusc.* VI, *Liber qui dicitur gratissimus*, cap. xii, *P.L.*, cxlv, 115: Cujuscumque ergo criminis reus exstiterit ille qui consecrat: nimirum sive superbus, sive luxuriosus, sive homicida, sive etiam simoniacus; ipse quidem pollutus est, et lethali procul dubio lepra perfusus: sed donum Dei, quod per illum transit, nullius labe polluitur, nullius contagione fœdatur . . . Ponamus ergo ut mali sacerdotes quodammodo lapidei sint canales: in lapideis autem canalibus aqua nil germinat, donec per eos decurrens, in fecundas se areolas fundat. . . . Non enim exhorreat columba, non nauseat sordentium quorumlibet ministerium, dum ille, in quem tota descendit, solus consecrationis teneat principatum.— St. Peter Damian, however, does not make use of the doctrine of the character to prove the validity of the ordinations performed by unworthy ministers.

[15] Manegold, *M. G. Lib.*, t. i, p. 430; Anselm of Lucca, *Ibid.*, p. 522.

of Constance, after having exposed and adopted successively diverse solutions, finally adhered to the doctrine of St. Augustine.[16]

Bernold's hesitations are found again during the middle of the 12th. century in Peter Lombard and Gratian. The Master of Sentences records [17] the four opinions which were held by his contemporaries concerning the value of heretical — viz., simoniacal — ordinations, and does not embrace any of them. Gratian looks upon as null the ordination to deaconship made by heretics.[18]

There is no rashness in believing that these discussions about the value of the Sacraments conferred by unworthy men, as well as the condition of the morals of the clergy, helped the spread of the heresies of the 12th. century. Among those heresies, that of the Albigenses and that of the Waldenses taught explicitly the necessity of the minister's sanctity for the validity of the Sacraments. This error was condemned at the beginning of the 13th. century by the Church, through the voice of Pope Innocent III. A profession of faith was drawn up and imposed on the Waldenses who became converts to the Catholic Church. In it the Augustinian doctrine is solemnly affirmed:

"Sacramenta quoque, quae in ea [Ecclesia] celebrantur, inaestimabili atque invisibili virtute Spiritus Sancti cooperante, licet a peccatore sacerdote ministrentur, dum Ecclesia eum recipit, in nullo reprobamus, nec ecclesiasticis officiis

[16] See his treatise *De sacramentis excommunicatorum, P.L.*, cxlviii, 1061.

[17] *Sent.*, lib. iv, Dist. XXV. Cf. Roland, *Sent.* (Gietl, p. 217).

[18] *Dict.* ante can. *Daibertum*, 24, caus. 1, q. VII. *Corpus Juris canonici*, ed. Richter, Lipsiæ, 1833, t. i, p. 374.

vel benedictionibus ab eo celebratis detrahimus, sed benevolo animo tanquam a justissimo amplectimur, quia non nocet malitia episcopi vel presbyteri neque ad baptismum infantis, neque ad eucharistiam conferendam, vel ad caetera ecclesiastica officia subditis celebrata." [19]

The faithful felt uneasy especially as regards the value of the Eucharist celebrated by unworthy ministers.[19a] Hence Pope Innocent III takes up again this point in his treatise *De Sacro altaris Mysterio*.[20] The ministers not excluded from the bosom of the Church — Innocent speaks only of these — whatever may be their unworthiness, truly consecrate the Eucharist:

"In sacramento corporis Christi nihil a bono majus, nihil a malo minus perficitur sacerdote, dummodo sacerdos cum caeteris in arca consistat, et formam observet traditam a columba, quia non in merito sacerdotis, sed in verbo conficitur Creatoris. Non ergo sacerdotis iniquitas effectum impedit sacramenti, sicut nec infirmitas medici virtutem medicinae corrumpit. Quamvis igitur opus operans aliquando sit immundum, semper tamen opus operatum est mundum."

At the beginning of the 12th. century, the reform started by Popes Leo IX and Gregory VII reached its results; the passions which it had aroused gradually subsided; the controversies about simoniacal ordinations came to an end by the very fact, and the Augustinian teaching, forgotten for a while, resumed the place it occupied formerly. Thus fully brought out, the dogma of the efficacy of the Sacraments was about

[19] Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, n. 370 (new ed., n. 424).

[19a] Roland remarks that in the 12th. century they had it as an axiom that "Verba imprecantis sacerdotis non faciunt eucharistium, sed vita."

[20] Lib. III, cap. v; *P.L.*, ccxvii, 844. Cf. Marbode, Bishop of Rennes († 1123), *Epistola II; P.L.*, clxxi, 1472 sq.

to be studied in all its various aspects by the great scholastic theologians.

§ VI. *The Formula* Ex Opere Operato. *The Problem of the Causality of the Sacraments during the 13th. Century.*

The controversies about simoniacal ordinations, and generally concerning the Sacraments administered by unworthy ministers, resulted in the invention of the formulas *opus operatum* and *opus operantis.*

Although an unworthy minister sins grievously when he confers a sacrament, nevertheless the sacrament itself is not tainted. Compelled as they were to express this truth, theologians were led to distinguish, in the administration of the Sacraments, between the action of the minister who confers the rite, *opus operans,* and the rite itself which is performed, *opus operatum.* Peter of Poitiers (†1205) was the first who applied that distinction to Baptism, in order to show that the value of this sacrament does not depend on the merits of the minister nor on those of the subject.[21]

This same distinction was used in the schools, at the beginning of the 13th. century, for expressing in every action, the agent's coöperation (actio, opus operans) and the act itself (actum, opus operatum). The *actio,* the *opus operans* may be good or it may be bad, according to the agent's dispositions; the *actum,* the *opus operatum* has an objective value, independent of that of the *actio.* When the Jews put Christ to

[21] *Sententiarum* lib. V, cap. vi; *P.L.,* ccxi, 1235: Baptizatio dicitur actio illius qua baptizat, quae est aliud opus quam baptismus, quia est opus operans, sed baptismus est opus operatum ut ita liceat loqui.

death, their deed, says Peter of Poitiers, was heinous; on the contrary, the Savior's death was praiseworthy and willed by God:

"Approbavit Deus passionem Christi illatam a Judaeis et quod fuit opus Judaeorum operatum; non approbavit opera Judaeorum operantia, et actiones quibus operati sunt illam passionem." [22]

Likewise the actions of the devil are wicked, for they spring from his malice; on the contrary, the final outcome of his acts contributes to the glory of God:

"Omnia ei [Deo] serviunt, id est praestant materiam laudis, et diabolus ei servit et approbat ejus opera quae operatur, non quibus operatur; opera operata ut dici solet, non opera operantia, quae omnia mala sunt, quia nulla ex charitate . . . pro actione enim diaboli offenditur Deus sed non pro acto." [23]

The application of that theory to the Sacraments was quite natural and sure to be made sooner or later. The celebration of a sacramental rite by an unworthy minister is a bad action, a sacrilege, but what is celebrated is always good:

"Quamvis igitur opus operans aliquando sit immundum, semper tamen opus operatum est mundum,"

as Innocent III said. As we might expect, in order to express the objective efficacy of the Sacraments, they used the formula *ex opere operato,* which became the symbol of the Augustinian doctrine, and they op-

[22] *Sententiarum* lib. I, cap. xvi.
[23] *Ibid.*

posed it to the formula *ex opere operantis,* which embodied the Donatist error.

In the middle of the 13th. century, these two formulas were commonly used in the schools. They were employed particularly in pointing out the difference which exists, from the point of view of efficacy, between the Christian Sacraments and the Mosaic rites. To set forth that difference the authors distinguished between the sacramental rite, *opus operatum,* and the use of the rite, *opus operans.*[24] Did the Jewish sacramental rite, the *opus operatum,* bestow grace? To this question, some — and they could appeal to the authority of Hugh of St. Victor — replied that the Jewish sacramental rite produced grace, but not immediately and directly, like a sacrament of the New Law; it produced grace, not as a cause of grace, but rather as a figure of the Christian Sacraments. The Jewish rite was efficacious because of the relation of figure, by which it was united to the passion of Christ and to the Christian Sacraments of which it was the symbol.[25] Others — St. Thomas among them — denied any objective efficacy to the Sacraments of the Old Law, except circumcision:

"Alii dicunt et melius quod nullo modo sacramenta ipsa veteris legis, id est opus operatum, in eis gratiam conferebat, excepta circumcisione."[26]

[24] St. Thomas, *In IV,* Dist. I, q. 1, art. 5: In sacramento est duo considerare, scilicet ipsum sacramentum et usum sacramenti. Ipsum sacramentum dicitur a quibusdam opus operatum; usus autem sacramenti est ipsa operatio, quae a quibusdam opus operans dicitur.

[25] St. Thomas, *Ibid.:* Indirecte et ex consequenti habebant justificare [sacramenta v. l.], quasi mediantibus nostris sacramentis per ea significatis a Deo significationem habentia.

[26] *Ibid.*

The Christian Sacraments alone are efficacious *ex opere operato.*

But if the Sacraments of the Old Law were not efficacious *ex opere operato,* did they not possess at least some efficacy *ex opere operantis?* Here again two systems were followed. Some theologians, after Peter Lombard, thought that the use of the Jewish rites was of no benefit and merit, even for those who practised them with faith and charity. On the contrary, St. Thomas [27] and many others taught that, when accompanied with charity, the use of the Mosaic Sacraments produced grace. Thus the Jewish rites were efficacious *ex opere operantis.*

The teaching of St. Thomas actually prevailed. It was admitted by all theologians in the 16th. century. It was against this doctrine that Protestants set forth their errors: like those of the Old Law, the Sacraments of the New Law are efficacious merely *ex opere operantis.*

* * *

Whilst the theologians of the 13th. century disagreed as to the nature of the efficacy of the Sacraments of the Old Law, all affirmed most positively that the Sacraments of the New Law "confer grace *ex opere operato* and produce what they signify, unless the subject places an obstacle thereto." [28]

Furthermore, in their fondness of accuracy and in their eagerness for interpreting dogma in dependence

[27] *Ibid.:* Communiter tenetur quod usus eorum [sacramentorum v. l.] meritorius esse poterat, si ex charitate fieret.—See these various opinions in St. Bonaventure, *In IV Sent.* Dist. I, pars i, art. 1, quaest. 5.

[28] St. Bonaventure, *In IV Sent.* Dist. I, pars i, art. 1, q. 3; St. Thomas, *Ibid.*

of philosophy, theologians attempted to determine by means of the idea of cause what is the efficacy of the *opus operatum.* Thus dogma entered into a new phase, a phase altogether metaphysical and not yet over.

All theologians agreed that the Sacraments of the New Law, efficacious *ex opere operato,* are in some way causes of grace. The greatest variety of opinions arose concerning the way of explaining that sacramental causality.[29]

If the sacrament is a cause of grace, it can be apparently only its efficient cause. Now there seem to be some most serious difficulties against the sacrament, which is a bodily rite, being the efficient cause of a spiritual effect, that is to say, against its possessing in itself the power of producing such an effect. For the causative power imparted to a being must be in conformity with the essence of that being:

"Quod recipitur ab aliquo, est in eo per modum recipientis."

Besides it is impossible to understand what that causative power the sacrament would possess is in itself, or when it is communicated to the rite — is it when the sacrament was instituted by Christ, or when it is administered by the priest? — and how long it adheres to the sacrament.[30] The problem evidently was a most difficult one.

[29] St. Thomas, *In IV Sent.* Dist. I, quaest. i, art. 4: Omnes coguntur ponere sacramenta novae legis aliquo modo causas gratiae esse, propter auctoritates quae hoc expresse dicunt. Sed diversi diversimode eas causas ponunt.

[30] See these objections summed up in St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.,* 3 p., q. 62, art. 4; *In IV,* D. I, q. I, a. 4; and St. Bonaventure, *IV Sent.* D. I, p. I, a. I, q. 4.

Three principal systems were framed for its solution, and they deserve our attention on account of the great importance they formerly enjoyed: the system of the *occasional causality,* that of the *dispositive instrumental causality,* and that of the *efficacious instrumental causality* of grace.

Many theologians, whom St. Bonaventure styles *magni magistri,* resolved the problem by suppressing it. According to them, the Sacraments are not causes, properly so called, of grace; they have not in themselves the power of producing it. They are causes improperly so called,—*causae sine quibus non,*— mere occasional causes of grace. This system we call the system of *occasional causality.* It was adopted by St. Bonaventure,[31] and later on by Duns Scotus[32] and by the Franciscan school.

In this system, the Sacraments have in themselves no causative virtue that concurs effectively in the production of their effects; this is why they are not true causes. A sacrament produces grace by a kind of concomitance; in consequence of an order established by God, a Divine virtue accompanies a sacrament, and it is that virtue which acts directly in the soul of the subject. God bound Himself by a sort of an agreement,— by a compact drawn with the Church, Duns Scotus will say later on,— to impart His grace to all those who, being properly disposed, receive the Sacraments. The whole efficacy of a sacrament comes from that Divine agreement: a sacrament is merely the occasion which recalls to God His promises; it is a mere condition *sine qua non;* it has in itself no virtue productive of grace.

[31] St. Bonaventure, *Ibid.* ad II quaest. later.
[32] D. Scotus, *In IV,* D. 1, Quaest. 4 et 5.

To illustrate this doctrine, a classical comparison was brought forward. A sacrament is like a lead *denarius* which has no value in itself, but which, by the king's command, might entail for its possessor the privilege of receiving five hundred pounds. Or again,[33] Naaman was cured of leprosy by bathing in the Jordan, on the advice of Prophet Eliseus. Neither the water of the river, nor the word of Eliseus possessed the power of healing. The cause of the cure was the Divine power which accompanied Naaman's ablution. Likewise it is not the sacrament that sanctifies by itself, it is the Divine action accompanying the administration of the sacrament. There is no production of grace by the sacrament, but a mere concomitance of the production of grace and of the sacrament.[34]

This system was deemed the most reasonable of all, and in no way detrimental to faith:

"Huic positioni," said St. Bonaventure, "pietas fidei non repugnat et ratio consentit."

Hence it enjoyed a real success[35] until the time of

[33] St. Bonaventure, *Ibid.*

[34] This system is thus summed up by St. Thomas, *In IV*, D. I, q. I, art. 4: Quidam enim dicunt, quod non sunt [sacramenta] causae quasi facientes aliquid in anima, sed causae sine quibus non: quia increata virtus, quae sola effectus ad gratiam pertinentes in anima facit, sacramentis assistit per quamdam Dei ordinationem, et quasi pactionem. Sic enim ordinavit, et quasi pepigit Deus, ut qui sacramenta accipiunt, simul ab eo gratiam recipiant, non quasi sacramenta aliquid faciant ad hoc. Et est simile de illo, qui accipit denarium plumbeum facta tali ordinatione, ut qui habuerit unum de illis denariis, habeat centum libras a rege, qui quidem denarius non dat illas centum libras, sed solus rex accipienti ipsum. Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, 3 p., q. 62, a. 1 et 4; *Quodl.* 12, art. 14

[35] Such was substantially the system of Durandus of Saint-

the Council of Trent when it was transformed into the modern system of moral causality.

However, the opinion of the Franciscan school was far from winning universal approbation. Many theologians, like St. Thomas, thought it lessened too much altogether the efficacy of the Sacraments. As no end was assigned to them but that of reminding God of His promise, they were reduced to the part of mere signs.

"Sed hoc non videtur sufficere ad salvandum dicta sanctorum,"

the Angelic Doctor objected. What became, in this system, of the expression "continent gratiam" used by Hugh of St. Victor, and of the definition of a sacrament, given by Peter Lombard? This is why, in the name of Tradition, many theologians affirmed the existence, in the Sacraments, of a power productive of grace. They did not shrink from the problem of sacramental causality, and, for its solution, they had recourse either to the system of *dispositive instrumental causality,* or to that of the *efficient instrumental causality.*[36]

After Peter Lombard, the upholders of the system of the *dispositive causality* distinguished two effects of the Sacraments: the *sacramentum et res* and the *res tantum.* The *sacramentum et res* is the character, for the Sacraments that produce this character, and

Pourçain, Occam and all the Nominalists. Their doctrine is to be found in the IVth. book of *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.

[36] Our English-speaking readers will forgive us these somewhat barbarous expressions, translated literally from the Latin. To replace these scholastic terms by terms of a genuine Anglo-Saxon ring is an impossible task. [Tr.]

for the others, a spiritual ornament the nature of which is not described; the *res tantum* is grace. The sacrament is truly the efficient cause of the first effect: the character or the ornament; God gave to the sacrament the power of producing it effectively. As regards the second effect, namely grace, the sacrament is only a dispositive cause. The sacrament, by means of the character or of the ornament, disposes the soul in such a way that God is necessarily prompted to infuse His grace into that soul if the subject places no obstacle to the Divine action. This disposition calls for grace. Hence by bringing about this disposition the sacrament produces grace indirectly and immediately:

"Alii dicunt quod in sacramentis duo consequuntur in anima, unum quod est sacramentum et res, sicut character, vel aliquis ornatus animae in sacramentis, in quibus non imprimitur character. Aliud quod est res tantum, sicut gratia. Respectu ergo primi effectus sunt sacramenta causae aliquo modo efficientes: sed respectu secundi sunt causae disponentes tali dispositione quae est necessitas nisi sit impedimentum ex parte recipientis." [37]

The author of this system, or rather the first who exposed it in his writings, was the Franciscan Alexander of Hales,[38] of the earlier part of the 13th. cen-

[37] St. Thomas, *In IV*, D. I, q. I, art. 4. Cf. St. Bonaventure, *In IV*, Dist. I, pars i, art. 1, q. 4.

[38] *Summae Theol.*, IV, quaest. V, membr. 4: Sacramenta sunt causae alicujus effectus in anima; non dico solum disponendo sed efficiendo: efficiunt enim simpliciter characterizando et ornando. Unde dico quod singula sacramenta aliquo modo ornant animam vel imprimendo characterem vel alio modo signando. Et hujusmodi ornatus sive signationis sunt sacramenta causa efficiens.—As to grace, it is God Himself who pours it into the soul adorned with the character or *ornatus* and properly disposed for the sacrament.

tury. However, this system became perfectly consistent only after St. Thomas had expressed it with accuracy by means of his theory of instrumental cause. Alexander explained quite satisfactorily indeed how grace is produced in the soul; it is God Himself who directly infuses it. The sacramental rite does not reach its physical entity; it produces simply the ornament which calls for grace. But how can this ornament, in its turn, be produced by the sacrament? How can this spiritual effect have a physical rite for its efficient cause? The whole problem of sacramental causality still remained to be solved.

This St. Thomas fully realized. With a view to solve the antinomy, he distinguished two kinds of causes: the principal and the instrumental cause.

The principal cause is that which produces its effect by the power special and inherent to its very nature, whilst the instrumental cause does not act by its own power, but by the power it receives from the principal cause. Now, the effect produced is always similar to the productive power of the agent; hence the effect of the instrumental cause is similar, not to the nature of the instrument, but to that of the principal cause; for it is the principal cause that communicates to the instrument the power of producing its effect. According to the comparison used by St. Thomas, a bedstead made by a joiner is not like the axe that carved it, but like the idea that was in the joiner's mind and imparted to the instrument the power of producing an artistic piece of work:

"Virtus agendi proportionatur agenti. Unde alio modo oportet ponere virtutem agendi in agente principali, alio modo in agente instrumentali. Agens enim principale agit

secundum exigentiam suae formae; et ideo virtus activa in ipso est aliqua forma vel qualitas habens completum esse in natura. Instrumentum autem agit ut motum ab alio, et ideo competit sibi virtus proportionata motui." [39]

The Sacraments are instrumental causes which hold the power of producing their effects from God, the principal cause of the justification of the soul. These effects, then, will be similar to the power imparted by God to the Sacraments: that power is spiritual; so also the effects of the Sacraments will be spiritual. Hence, although corporeal, the Sacraments may be the instrumental efficient causes of that disposition which calls for grace:

"[Sacramenta materialia] in quantum sunt instrumenta divinae misericordiae justificantis, pertingunt instrumentaliter ad aliquem effectum in ipsa anima, qui primo correspondet sacramentis, sicut est character vel aliquid hujusmodi. Ad ultimum autem effectum, qui est gratia, non pertingunt etiam instrumentaliter nisi dispositive, in quantum hoc, ad quod instrumentaliter effective pertingunt, est dispositio, quae est necessitas, quantum in se est, ad gratiae susceptionem." [40]

Such is the system of *dispositive instrumental causality*.

This system enjoyed a great success in the Thomistic school [41] until the 16th. century when it fell into dis-

[39] *In IV,* D. I, q. I, art. 4. Cf. *Sum. Theol., 62,* art. 1.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] Its defenders were Pierre of la Palu, *In IV,* D. I, q. 1; Capreolus, q. I, Art. 1, conclusione 3; Desa d' Espagne, q. 3, art. 3, notat. 4; Ferrare, 4, contr. gent., cap. 57. The main reason which prompted these theologians to uphold the dispositive causality "est quod existimaverint gratiam esse formam, quae non educitur de potentia animae, sed creatur." Grace being a created

credit owing to the sharp criticisms of Cardinal Cajetan.[42] Nowadays Father Billot, S. J.,[43] has brought it again into honor at the Roman College, and has shown what profitable use theologians might make of it for explaining the doctrine of the reviviscence of the Sacraments. When the sacrament is valid, the disposition that calls for grace is always produced; however, if the subject is not properly disposed, grace is not given. Because of the disposition which is permanent in the soul, it will be given when the subject repents and thus removes the obstacle to the reception of grace.

But the weak point of this system is its altogether unsatisfactory explanation of the nature of that disposition exigent of grace. This disposition, we are told, must not be identified with the moral dispositions of faith, repentance, charity, and others necessary in order that the subject may place no obstacle to grace. We are told also, that, as to the Sacraments that produce a character, the disposition is the character itself. This we understand. But, for the other Sacraments, what is it? An *aliquis ornatus animae* which media val theologians were unable to explain satisfactorily.[44] Besides, is not this disposition useless? If the sacrament can be the effective in-

gift, and since God cannot use an instrument to create, grace then must be produced in the soul directly by God. But how could the sacrament be an instrumental cause of the disposition? The latter "educitur de potentia animae," and consequently the sacrament can produce it "instrumentaliter."

[42] *In* 3am *Part.* quaest. 62.

[43] *De Ecclesiae sacramentis,* Romae, 1896, t. i, pp. 95 et sq., 106 et sq.

[44] Cf. St. Bonaventure, *In IV,* D. I, pars I, art, q. 4.—Fr. Billot, *Ibid.,* endeavors to explain what might be in the case of each sacrament that disposition exigent of grace.

strumental cause of that disposition, why could it not produce in a similar way grace itself? These difficulties explain why, after some centuries of success, this system finally fell into oblivion.

Besides, St. Thomas himself, after teaching most plainly dispositive instrumental causality, gave it up towards the end of his life, as is proved by his *Summa Theologica,*[45] and took up, instead, the system of *efficient instrumental causality,* which after Cajetan's explanations, has become what is termed the system of physical causality.

The difference between this system and the previous one, is the suppression of the disposition exigent of grace, a disposition which is deemed useless. The Sacraments are effective instrumental causes of grace itself.

How a spiritual power, productive of grace, can dwell in a physical rite, St. Thomas shows by a reasoning similar to that mentioned above, and based on the concepts of principal and instrumental cause. God alone can be the principal cause of grace, for grace is a kind of participation in the Divine likeness, and God alone, by His own power, can make us share in the likeness of His nature. But the sacrament (as an instrument) can produce grace in us; for the in-

[45] 3 p., quaest. 62, art. 1, 4. Many authors refuse to admit that St. Thomas gave up the system of dispositive causality. Capreolus thought that in his *Summa Theologica* Aquinas teaches that the Sacraments are instrumental causes not of habitual grace (gratum faciens) but of sacramental grace, viz., the disposition exigent of grace. Others — Father Billot, *op. cit.,* p. 74, is one of them — would discover the true mind of the Angelic Doctor in interpreting the obscure passage of the *Summa* by the *Commentaries on the Sentences.* It seems better to admit that on this point as on some others St. Thomas modified his early teaching.

strument, acting by the efficacy it receives from the chief agent, is able to produce an effect which does not resemble it. In virtue of the impulse the sacrament receives from God, it can produce an effect of the spiritual order, an effect in keeping with the impulse by which it is moved.

"Causa . . . instrumentalis non agit per virtutem suae formae, sed solum per motum quo movetur a principali agente; unde effectus non assimilatur instrumento, sed principali agenti, sicut lectus non assimilatur securi, sed arti quae est in mente artificis. Et hoc modo sacramenta novae legis gratiam causant; adhibentur enim ex divina ordinatione hominibus ad gratiam in eis causandam." [46]

This instrumental power, which has for its purpose to confer grace, does not remain in the sacrament, but is transitory. For the instrument acts only in so far as it receives an impulse from the principal agent; and this impulse is essentially transitory. The sacramental rite, then, possesses this causative virtue only at the moment God uses it to pour His grace into the soul.[47] Moreover, this sacramental causality is due to the passion and merits of Jesus Christ. The sanctifying power of the Sacraments flows from the divinity of Christ through His humanity.[48] Let us add that theologians, divided as they were regarding sacramental causality, agreed on deriving from the merits of the Savior the whole efficacy of the Christian Sacraments.

As our readers may realize, the system of efficient instrumental causality contains the principles that will

[46] Q. 62, art. 1.
[47] Art. 4.
[48] Art. 5.

lead logically the theologians of subsequent ages to the modern system of physical causality. However, from St. Thomas to Cajetan there is a great distance. In vain should we look, in the *Summa,* for expressions as precise as those we find in the commentaries on the *Summa,* by the illustrious Cardinal: for instance, that the Sacraments are physical instrumental causes which reach grace in its very being and infuse it into the soul. The teaching of the Angelic Doctor is more meagre.

The three systems just exposed had their respective followers in the theological schools, not only during the 13th. century, but also during the following centuries until the Council of Trent. The Franciscan school made its own the system of occasional causality, after it had been adopted by Duns Scotus, the formidable adversary of the Thomistic opinion regarding instrumental efficient causality.[49] The Thomistic school remained faithful to the systems exposed by the Angelic Doctor: this does not mean that no other more or less composite system originated within its precincts. Suarez [50] mentions all those that were still spoken of in his time and reckons six of them: their exposition would be rather uninteresting.

The various theological schools disputed among

[49] *In IV Sent.,* Dist. I, art. 4, et 5. "Susceptio sacramenti est dispositio necessitans ad effectum signatum per sacramentum, non quidem per aliquam formam intrinsecam, per quam necessario causaret terminum, vel aliquam dispositionem praeviam; *sed tantum per assistentiam Dei causantis illum effectum,* non necessario absolute, sed necessitate respiciente potentiam ordinatam: *disposuit enim universaliter et de hoc Ecclesiam certificavit quod suscipienti tale sacramentum, ipse conferret effectum signatum.*"

[50] *In* 3am *P. quaest.* lxii, art. 4, disp. 9, sect. 2.

themselves regarding the causality of the Sacraments, if not always peaceably, at least without any interference on the part of the Church. As a matter of fact, the latter had not to decide for this or that system, since the dogma of the objective efficacy of the Sacraments was not in question. Hardly does she manifest, in the *Decretum ad Armenos,* her preference for the Thomistic systems. But the Protestant errors are soon to rise, and, in order to condemn them, the Church will formulate definitions which will tell, as a consequence, on the destinies of the theological systems.

§ VII. *The Protestant Sacramental System and the Definitions of the Council of Trent.*

One of the advantages of historical theology is to set off most strongly the eccentric character of heresies. Whilst Catholic tradition, of which we have followed the majestic development, placed always the efficacy of a sacrament in the rite itself, Protestantism pretends to find it exclusively in the subject; so that its conception manifestly deviates from Christian principles. This conception was framed, indeed, so as to harmonize the sacramental doctrine with a likewise antitraditional theory of justification.

* * *

The sacramental system of Protestants is wholly conditioned by their doctrine of justification. According to the Reformers, justification does not consist — as the Catholic Church teaches it does — in the forgiveness of sins and in the internal sanctification of the soul, wrought by the Sacraments or by

perfect contrition. It consists only in a merely extrinsic application of the merits and holiness of Jesus Christ. God beholds the sinner through the merits of His Son, and thus the sinner appears just to the eyes of God. No interior change is produced in the soul: sins remain in it. The change is wholly external: the merits of Jesus Christ cover the sinner and hide his wickedness from the sight of God.

The only means at man's disposal, by which he may obtain thus to be clothed with the merits of Jesus Christ, is faith, that is to say, the trust that he is justified. Good works, such as repentance, are completely useless; besides, they are impossible, since human nature, which has been substantially vitiated by original sin, cannot bring a coöperation properly so called to the work of its salvation.

If faith alone justifies and can justify, the Sacraments have no objective efficacy to bring about justification; they are not efficacious *ex opere operato*.

"[Sacramenta] sunt signa, seu sacramenta justificationis, quia sunt sacramenta justificantis fidei et non operis: unde tota eorum efficacia est ipsa fides, non operatio. Qui enim iis credit, is implet ea, etiamsi nihil operetur." [51]

On the denial of the objective efficacy of the Sacraments, all Protestants agreed: dissensions began when the value of the Sacraments and the reason of their existence had to be explained, for all admitted the divine institution of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper. Why did Christ establish these two Sacraments?

According to the view advanced, at the outset of the

[51] LUTHER, *De Captivitate babylonica*, cap. de Baptismo, t. ii, p. 287.

Reformation, by Luther and Melanchthon, the Sacraments were intended solely as tokens of the truthfulness of the Divine promise that sins were to be forgiven by faith, and thus they were, for the faithful, guarantees of the forgiveness of their sins.[52] The Sacraments remind the faithful of the Divine promise, as a picture reminds us of him whom it represents.[53] They are messengers, announcing to men God's deeds of kindness, pledges that make us sure of these deeds, nothing more.[54]

The Sacraments, then, have no intrinsic power: they serve only to strengthen and confirm faith; all their efficacy comes from faith in the forgiveness of sins. It is because a sacrament has no other purpose than that of exciting faith, that, according to Protestants, sacramental formulas are exhortatory, not consecratory. The sacred ceremony consists chiefly in an exhortation: a sacrament is a kind of acted sermon which keeps up the faith of the subject.

Since the Sacraments are intended only to stimulate faith, they are not necessary for salvation. Any one who abides steadfastly in the faith to the Divine promises is free to use them or not, without compromising in the least the interests of his soul. At bottom, the Sacraments are superfluous institutions; we may ob-

[52] Luther, *Ibid.* Melanchthon, *Loci theologici,* cap. de Sacramentis, Basileæ, 1561, p. 379: Quanquam multi sunt fines sacramentorum ordinati, tamen longe omnibus anteferendus est hic principalis finis, quod sint signa voluntatis Dei erga nos, videlicet testimonia addita promissioni gratiæ.

[53] Melanchthon, *Apologia Confessionis august.,* ad art. 13.

[54] Calvin, *Inst. chrét.,* iv, 14-17: The sacraments are given to us by God, as bearers of good tidings are sent by men; namely they do not at all bestow any good, but only announce and declare the gifts we owe to the liberality of God, or at most are pledges that make us sure of these gifts.

tain grace, even though we do not receive them, nor even wish to receive them.[55]

As regards efficacy, there is, then, no difference between the Sacraments of the Old Law, and those of the New. They differ between themselves only by the rites and ceremonies of which they are respectively made up. The Mosaic Sacraments consisted of actions without words, the Christian Sacraments consist of actions and of words: these words recalling the Divine promises to grant pardon to faith.[56]

In short, the sacramental rite has no efficacy by itself in the work of justification: its whole function is to keep up the faith in the Divine promise:

"Baptismus neminem justificat, nec ulli prodest, sed fides in verbum promissionis, cui additur baptismus, haec enim justificat et implet id quod baptismus significat. Fides enim est submersio veteris hominis et emersio novi hominis." [57]

However, after 1535, Luther came back to more Catholic views concerning the efficacy of the Sacraments, particularly of Baptism. The baptismal rite, he said, "gives" holiness and life everlasting, "works the regeneration and the renewal" of man.[58] Yet faith always remains for Luther the cause of the efficacy of Baptism. It was owing to a most incomprehensible self-contradiction that he held infant Baptism.

But the most radical rejection of sacramental effi-

[55] MOEHLER, Symbolism (London, 1906), pp. 205–207. Cf. A. THEINER, *Acta Genuina Concilii Tridentini*, I, p. 383.

[56] LUTHER, *De Captivit. babylon.*, cap. de Bapt. *Ibid.*

[57] LUTHER, *Ibid.*

[58] *Predigt von d. heilig. Taufe*, 1535, n. 11, 28, edit. Walch, Halle, 1740–1753, t. X.

cacy is found in Zwingli's writings. According to the Swiss Reformer, the Sacraments are not even tokens of the Divine promises and heavenly friendship, destined to nourish faith; they are mere signs of Christian profession, by which the faithful testify that they belong to the Church of Jesus Christ and separate themselves from the heathen.[59] It would be rather difficult to go any further and to lower still more the value of the Sacraments of the New Law.

* * *

In its seventh session[60] (1547), the Council of Trent condemned all the errors set forth by Protestants regarding the efficacy of the Sacraments. The seventh decree is aimed at the fifth article of the Augsburg Confession (1530), which declared that the Sacraments do not always give grace to the subjects properly disposed, but only now and then, and according to God's good pleasure.[61] Besides, in the twelfth decree, the Council proscribed the doctrine of the Anabaptists, who, like the Donatists of old, made erroneously the efficacy of the Sacraments depend on the minister's sanctity.[62] The Fathers of Trent solemnly proclaimed the necessity for salvation of the Christian Sacraments, or at least of the desire to receive them, their efficacy *ex opere operato,* their power of producing the grace they "contain," in all those who do not place any obstacle to it, finally their superiority over the Sacraments of the Old Law.

[59] ZWINGLI, *De vera et falsa religione,* Zurich, 1828-1842, t. iii, pp. 229, 231 et ss.

[60] Can. 2–8.

[61] A. THEINER, *op. cit.,* I, p. 384.

[62] A. THEINER, *Ibid.*

The Fathers — and this must be noticed — did not make use of the concept of cause to express their definitions, for one of their rules was not to touch on the controversies existing among Catholic theologians. Their method consisted in extracting from the heretical books the propositions that seemed to be against the Catholic doctrine, in submitting for study these propositions to a committee of theologians entrusted with the drawing up of definitions, and finally in discussing among themselves the work of the theologians, until they had come to the definitive formula of the decrees. They were told to abstain from any "useless and superfluous questions." [63]

Thus we understand why the Council left aside the notion of cause which, had it been used, would have obliged the Fathers to decide more or less for this or that system, and why also it expressed the dogma of the objective efficacy of the Sacraments without pronouncing upon the intimate nature of that efficacy.

However, although it did not decide upon the existing controversies, the Council of Trent gave a definite orientation to theological speculation properly so called: so true it is that the authority of the Church alone can lead us to the progressive knowledge of revealed truth. The tenor of the definitions of Trent

[63] A. Theiner, *op. cit.*, t. i, p. 9: Mos fuit in sacro concilio Tridentino . . . ut cum de dogmatibus fidei agendum esset, primum articuli inter catholicos et haereticos controversi ex eorum libris colligerentur: qui antequam patribus proponerentur, exhibebantur disputandi ac discutiendi theologicis minoribus, id est non praelatis. . . . Sententiae per theologos dicendae deducantur ex sacra scriptura, traditionibus apostolorum, sacris et approbatis conciliis, summorum pontificum et sanctorum patrum constitutionibus et auctoritatibus, ac consensu ecclesiae catholicae: sint breves, nec vagentur per inutiles et superfluas quaestiones: abstineantque a protervis contentionibus. Cf. pp. 533, 603.

is rather unfavorable to the system of occasional causality. Unless the Sacraments are causes properly so called, they cannot, apparently, "contain the grace they signify," nor "confer" it *ex opere operato.* The *Decretum ad Armenos,* which contains similar formulas, had already thrown some discredit upon the systems that did not ascribe true causality to the Sacraments. No doubt, the system of instrumental causality, proposed by St. Thomas, best agreed with the decrees of the Council. But this system was a puzzle to the mind, especially after it had been stated with greater precision by Cardinal Cajetan. Hence, although the majority favored it, many could not make up their minds to adopt it. As for the system of dispositive causality, it was deemed antiquated.[64]

Then it was that Melchior Cano framed a new system in which the Sacraments are true causes of grace, as is implied by the definitions of the Church, but moral causes which entreat God efficaciously to pour His grace into the soul of the properly disposed subject. Thus, whilst remaining in perfect agreement with the definitions of Trent, the new opinion was doing away with all those difficulties from reason, which were raised against the system of St. Thomas. Melchior Cano was contributing a truly fresh idea to the solution of the problem, and of this he was fully conscious. The concept of moral cause is distinct

[64] We describe the state of mind of the theologians at the time of the council of Trent from Melchior Cano's *Relectio de Sacramentis,* pars. iv[a], Matritii, 1764, I, II, pp. 425–434. Melchior Cano was sent to the Council of Trent, in the capacity of theologian by Charles the Fifth. The first edition of the *Relectio de Sacramentis* was published at Salamanca in 1550, three years after the seventh session of the Council of Trent, in which the definitions concerning the Sacraments were promulgated.

from the concept of occasional cause and condition *sine qua non,* used by the Scotists. For Cano as for Duns Scotus, it is God Himself who deposits grace in the soul; but whilst Scotus affirmed this was done in virtue of a covenant concluded between God and the Church and recalled by the sacrament, Melchior Cano teaches that this is done because of the intrinsic moral value of the sacrament, a value which is due to the merits of Jesus Christ.[65] The sacrament is a true moral instrumental cause. A *moral* cause it is, since it entreats God efficaciously to impart His grace; a moral *instrumental* cause it is also, because it holds this power of entreating from the merits of Christ.[66] Thus modified and brought into perfect agreement with the definitions of the Church, the system of Duns Scotus had many titles to success. It did actually spread rapidly in theological schools, especially after Vasquez, who lived toward the end of the 16th. century, had made it famous, by the brilliancy of his talent.

§ VIII. *The Actual Controversy about the Causality of the Sacraments.*

Since the Council of Trent, there have been, in the theological schools, only two systems about the causality of the Sacraments. The theologians of the end of the 16th. century and of the beginning of the 17th. still mention the old systems of occasional causality

[65] Melchior Cano does not consider his own system as related to that of Duns Scotus. Vasquez, whilst attributing the authorship of the system of moral causality to a Spanish theologian, Martin Ledesma, had this to say about Cano: "Uberius quam ullus alius nobis explicavit."

[66] Melchior Cano, *Ibid.*

and of dispositive causality: but it is only to dismiss them once for all.[67]

As regards the system of occasional causality, theologians said merely this:

"Concedere sacramentis solum illud genus causae sine qua non, perinde est ac dicere solum esse causas per accidens . . . non satis est concedere sacramentis genus causae per accidens respectu gratiae." [68]

After the Council of Trent, no Catholic scholar was bold enough to teach that the Sacraments were not true causes (causae per se) of grace.

As to the system of dispositive causality, it was deemed quite insufficient. For it merely pushes the problem further back and does not solve it at all. If it denies to the Sacraments the power of producing instrumentally grace itself, no more can it grant to them the power of producing the disposition, which is also of a supernatural order. And it does not suffice to answer that the disposition, the *ornatus animae* "educitur de potentia subjecti," and that, consequently, the sacrament may be its instrumental cause; for, since this disposition belongs to the same order as grace, it can be, no more than grace, "educta de potentia subjecti." [69] Supposing an instrumental physical power is granted to the Sacraments, it can be only in order to produce immediately grace in the soul.

Besides, the well known controversy which took place, towards the end of the 16th. century, between Suarez, who upheld physical causality, and Vasquez,

[67] Cf. SUAREZ, *In* 3am *Part.* quaest. 62, art. 4, disp. 9, and VASQUEZ, *In* 3am *Part.* quaest. 62, art. 4, disp. 132.

[68] VASQUEZ, *Ibid.*, cap. i, n. 9–10; cf. SUAREZ, sect. 2.

[69] VASQUEZ, *Ibid.*, cap. ii, n. 30; SUAREZ, *Ibid.*, sect. 2.

who defended moral causality, brought these two systems so much into notice,[70] that all the others were forgotten. These two systems we shall now expose, according to these two theologians.

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A physical cause has a direct and immediate influence on the production of its effect, and reaches the very being of its effect. An axe and a saw are physical causes of the cutting of the wood.

A physical cause may be principal or instrumental, according as it acts by its own motion or by the impulse it receives from the principal agent. The workman who cuts the wood is the principal physical cause of his work, the saw which he uses is the instrumental physical cause of the same. These notions of principal and of instrumental cause are at the bottom of the two systems, for the Sacraments can be but instrumental causes of grace, God alone, its principal cause.[71]

Now, according to Suarez and the theologians who, like him, follow St. Thomas, the Sacraments are *physical* instrumental causes of grace. They are instruments of which God makes use, to produce physically grace in the soul; their action brings about grace in the soul of the subject directly and immediately:

"Dicendum est non esse impossibile, neque implicare contradictionem, ut sacramenta sint propria ac physica instrumenta ad gratiam in anima efficiendam, attingendo immediate ac proxime ipsam gratiae productionem." [72]

[70] De Lugo, *De sacramentis*, disp. IV, sect. 4: Quaestio celebris est [de causalitate physica vel morali], et quam sua contentione et disputatione celebriorem reddiderunt P. Suarez et P. Vasquez.

[71] Suarez, quaest. 62, art. 4, disp. 9.

[72] Suarez, *Ibid.*, sect. 1.

Suarez justifies this doctrine by Biblical and Patristic testimonies,[73] the wording of which apparently favors, quite often, the physical causality of the Sacraments. He appeals also to several analogies, in order to show that God can impart to a material being the power of producing physically an effect of the supernatural order. Was not Christ's humanity a physical instrument of grace, since the contact of Jesus or even merely His word actually conferred it? Do not the minds of the elect receive the physical ability of eliciting acts of beatific vision?

But, besides that they are not beyond dispute, the proofs from authority do not suffice to establish so mysterious a system; it must be proved that physical causality "implies no contradiction." For reason finds it very difficult to conceive that efficacy which the sacrament is said to possess, and which would make it capable of producing physically a transcendent effect, grace.

Cardinal Cajetan[74] declared that this efficacy was nothing else than the supernatural impulse, communicated by God to the sacrament, at the moment when He uses it to sanctify man.

On the other hand, Suarez believes this efficacy is no special power added to the sacrament. It is derived merely from the "active obediential power," by which all created beings can be raised, owing to a special Divine coöperation, to a mode of action superior,

[73] *Ibid.*, sect. 2.

[74] *In* 3am *Part.* q. 62, art. 1 et 4. Cf. q. 13, art. 2: Ex hoc ipso quod Deus utitur aliqua re ut instrumento ad opus miraculosum, elevatur res illa in ordinem causae instrumentalis, et ipse passivus usus quo Deus illa utitur ad hoc opus, est motus quo a principali agente instrumentum movetur.

but not contradictory, to themselves. Any being possesses latent energies, capacities of tending gradually towards more perfect activities, which, at the God-appointed time, pass from the potential to the actual order. Thus the whole creation may serve as an instrument by means of which God may work miracles, and by this very fact the Sacraments are capable of being physical instrumental causes of grace:

"Diximus [virtutem sacramentorum] non esse rem aliquam superadditam, sed ipsammet entitatem rei, quae hoc ipso, quo creata est et subordinata primo agenti, est in potentia obedientiali active ut efficiat quidquid non implicat contradictionem respectu illius. Haec enim ratio obedientialis potentiae communis est sacramentis, quorum elevatio divina solum in hoc consistit, quod Deus altiori modo concurrit dando auxilium sufficiens, ut res operetur secundum hanc potentiam. . . . Hic concursus non fundatur in naturali eorum [sacramentorum] perfectione, sed in praedicta virtute obedientiali et infinita Dei virtute, cui omnia subordinantur." [75]

The explanation of Suarez is, perhaps, almost as abstruse as that of Cajetan. But is not dogma always bound to be abstruse, since it is supernatural truth? To some, also, the teaching of Suarez may seem to savor of evolutionism; besides, it is connected, as we shall see presently, with a peculiar view of grace.

If the Sacraments are physical instrumental causes of grace, it was objected to Suarez, we must of necessity admit that they are instruments which create grace: for the latter is a created gift. Now, the Sacraments cannot receive a creative efficacy, since God cannot communicate to a creature the power of creating.

[75] SUAREZ, *Ibid.*, sect. 1.

Grace, he answers unhesitatingly, is not created, but it is "drawn from the potential energies of the soul." Hence the sacrament can be the physical instrumental cause of the action by which grace is produced:

"Ad secundam difficultatem facilius respondetur, quidquid sit an possit creatura esse instrumentum creationis, gratiam tamen non creari. Et ideo ex hoc capite nihil obstare quominus sacramenta esse possint instrumenta gratiae. Quia gratia non fit sine concursu materiali animae, a qua pendet in fieri et conservari. Et ideo non creatur, sed educitur de potentia obedientiali ipsius animae. . . . In productione autem gratiae, quae fit per sacramenta, nullius rei creatio intercedit, sed fit solum quaedam veluti spiritualis alteratio seu mutatio perfectiva, qua per se primo fit animus, vel homo gratus Deo, ipsa vero gratia comproducitur, seu de potentia animae educitur." [76]

If grace itself is drawn "de potentia obedientiali animae," we understand how the causality of the sacrament may flow from the "obediential power" with which the rite, like all creatures, is supplied, in view of a superior activity.

The explanations of Suarez, closely connected as they were with a special notion of grace and with the theory of the "active obediential power" could not be admitted by those theologians who believe that grace is a created gift, and that the obediential power is "chimerical." So Billuart [77] and with him most Thomists parted from Suarez and preferred to adopt Cajetan's explanation. The system of Suarez perhaps deserved a better fate: it contains interesting data of

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] *De sacramentis in communi,* Dissert. 3, art. 2.

which some theologians have endeavored to make use in the actual controversies about the relation between the natural and the supernatural.

Whether interpreted by Cajetan or by Suarez, the system of physical causality remains a disconcerting puzzle for the mind. But, what is still more serious, it goes apparently against the theological doctrine of the reviviscence of the Sacraments.

At the time of Suarez, the reviviscence of Baptism was admitted by all, after St. Augustine, and held as certain; that of several other Sacraments was looked upon as probable.[78] When a sacrament is received in a "fictive" manner, that is to say, with the lack of the proper dispositions, it does not produce grace. It will produce it later, when the subject repents and thus removes from his soul the obstacle to grace. Now the theory of physical causality is absolutely unable to account for this fact, for physical causality demands absolutely the coexistence of the cause and of the effect, and in the reviviscence, the sacrament, even though it exists no longer, brings about grace. Vasquez[79] exposes triumphantly this objection in his forceful criticism of the Thomistic system.

As a matter of fact, no theologian was able to solve the difficulty. The scholastics of old got rid of it by denying reviviscence: this was a defeat. Even at the time of Suarez, others admitted this reviviscence only for the Sacraments that impress a character; the latter acted as a physical cause, in case of reviviscence. But why should reviviscence be limited to some Sac-

[78] SUAREZ, *Ibid.*, disp. 8, sect. 3; VASQUEZ, disp. 132, cap. 4, n. 41–44.
[79] *Ibid.*

raments?[80] The most sensible among the Thomists "owned candidly," says Vasquez, that, in case of reviviscence, the Sacraments do not act as physical causes; but that, in view of the sacrament already administered, God Himself pours grace into the soul.[81] This too was to confess the shortcoming of the system and to point out most plainly its irremediably weak point. Hence many theologians, and some of no mean ability, seceded from the Thomistic school, and adopted Melchior Cano's view, of which the success was day by day on the increase.[82]

* * *

According to the explanation of Melchior Cano and of Vasquez, a moral cause is that which entreats effectively the physical cause to act: he who gives an efficacious advice or a command is truly the moral cause of what he has advised or commanded. Hence a moral cause has a real, though only indirect, influence, on the production of the effect; it can exercise its action only on a free being.

Like a physical cause, a moral cause may be principal or instrumental, according as his power of entreating is due to its own merits or to merits borrowed from another: he who supplies the money intended for the ransom of a prisoner, is the principal moral cause of the purchase, the servant whose mission it is to

[80] Cf. VASQUEZ, *Ibid.*

[81] SUAREZ holds this view. *Ibid.*

[82] We do not insist on the really too subtle objection presented by Vasquez and others against physical causality, viz., the administering of the sacrament being a transitory act, a rite made up of successive acts and words, how can it be at all, and at what moment is it, a physical cause? Suarez answers: The rite produces grace when it is completed. (Disput. 7, sect. 2).

deliver the money to the jail-keeper is its instrumental moral cause.

Now, the principal moral cause of grace is the Passion of Jesus Christ. The Savior is the only one who, because of His own merits obtained by the shedding of His blood, entreats God efficaciously to impart His grace to men. Differently from the Thomists, Vasquez and the upholders of moral causality, refuse to admit that Christ's humanity is a physical cause of our salvation and of grace. As regards our salvation, the causality of the humanity of Jesus is of the same kind as the causality of the Sacraments: it is moral,[83] with this difference, however, that the Savior is the principal moral cause, whilst the Sacraments are simply instrumental causes.

The Sacraments are instruments which entreat God effectively and infallibly to give His grace to those who receive them with the requisite dispositions. Vasquez compares this power of entreating to that of a prayer, objectively efficacious: the sacrament is like a prayer infallibly efficacious by itself and independently of the merits of the minister and of the subject. Just as the Savior's humanity, owing to His own merits, and just as the Apostles, owing to their credit in the sight of God, obtained, through their prayers, the miracles they performed, so also the Sacraments, in virtue of the Divine promise, entreat God efficaciously to bring about the sacramental effects.[84]

[83] VASQUEZ, *Ibid.*, disput. 133, cap. 1 et 2.

[84] Disput. 152, cap. 5, n. 80–83: Dicimus Christi humanitatem mediis suis meritis fuisse causam miraculorum: et Apostolos media invocatione et oratione fuisse instrumenta Dei ad sanitates et alia hujusmodi facienda, nempe per modum impetrationis. . . . Apostoli et humanitas Christi meritorie impetrabant a Deo miracula, et virtutes quas operabantur. . . . Eadem igitur

Melchior Cano expressed himself perhaps still better, when he said: The Sacraments entreat God to grant His grace, because the "price of the blood of Jesus Christ is communicated to them." And this communication is accounted for quite easily, if, as Melchior Cano suggests, the Sacraments are to be considered as being morally acts of the Redeemer, by which He sanctifies us. These acts, then, partake of the merits the Savior acquired by the shedding of His blood.

"Fides sana atque catholica docet duo. Alterum est, Deum per Christi humanitatem redemisse genus humanum. . . . *Ecce Agnus Dei, qui tollit peccata mundi.* Et, *hic est qui baptizat in Spiritu Sancto.* Quo testimonio ad id probandum utitur Augustinus libro contra Petilianum 3, cap. 45. Et ad Ephesios 5 dicitur Christum sanctificasse ecclesiam suam, atque mundasse. Alterum (quod fides quoque sana docet) sacramenta novae legis instrumenta esse Christi ad hanc redemptionem complendam." [85]

Thus understood, the Sacraments, Cano adds, contain grace morally, since they contain its price: does not a purse filled with gold morally contain a prisoner's deliverance, since there is in it the price of his ransom?

Besides, neither Melchior Cano nor Vasquez was embarrassed by the definitions of Councils and by the Biblical or Patristic testimonies. They were aware that they did not disagree with tradition, since the latter has no definite teaching about sacramental causality. They realized above all that the system they

ratione et minister sacramenti, et sacramentum ipsum, per quod impetrat, dicitur habere potestatem . . . gratiam producendi et eam in se continere.

[85] *Relect. de Sacramentis,* p. VI[a], p. 431.

proposed was far less disconcerting to the mind, than that of physical causality. Hence they were followed by a whole school,[86] which was improperly called the Scotistic school. In our days, the theory of moral causality has a remarkable success.[87] Moreover, it has undergone a few changes which it may be profitable to expose.

Developing the idea which Melchior Cano had imperfectly realized, Cardinal Franzelin looks upon the sacrament as being morally an act of Christ. In his works, the system of moral causality assumes a less metaphysical, a more pragmatic and concrete character; the sacrament is examined directly in its relations to Christ.

To unfold his thought, the author appeals to the teaching of St. Augustine. The minister of the sacrament is the representative of Jesus; he acts in His name, since he celebrates, in keeping with His commands, a rite which He instituted. Hence the action of the minister is, morally, an action of Christ Himself.[88] Now the sacrament, an action of the Re-

[86] De Lugo, *De Sacramentis in gen.*, disp. 4, sect. 4, and Tournely, *De Sacr. in gen.*, quaest. 3, art. 2, belong to that school.

[87] Franzelin, Hurter, Chr. Pesch uphold the system of moral causality. Father Billot sets forth an intermediary system. A disposition exigent of grace would be produced by the sacrament, neither physically nor morally, but *imperatively*. Sacraments are signs of an intentional order, which manifest God's intention to give such or such spiritual fruit to the recipients. This manifestation of the Divine intention is a disposition exigent of grace. [Fr. Billot's system has been advocated by Fr. Cronin in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, 1901, pp. 35, 403, 449. Tr.]

[88] *De Sacramentis in gen.*, th. X.: In omnibus ritibus sanctificantibus cujusmodi sunt sacramenta, Ecclesia et quivis Ecclesiae minister gerit moraliter personam Christi ex ipsius institutione ac mandato pro Christo legatione fungens.— Franzelin refers to the *de Baptismo*, lib. v, 14, 16, of St. Augustine.

deemer, partakes of the merits of the Passion and possesses an intrinsic value which prompts God infallibly to grant His grace.

"Sacramentum nomine Christi administratum ipsa sua dignitate derivata ex Christi meritis exigit, constanti lege praesentis ordinis reparati, collationem gratiae, ad quam est institutum." [89]

What determines God to impart His grace, is the value of the sacrament, which is thus a true moral cause; and the sacrament has this value, because it is an act of Christ.

Thus, we are brought back, in a roundabout way, to the Augustinian concept of a sacrament: a conception which the Middle Ages, in their fondness for metaphysics, had forgotten.

This conception of a sacrament leaves room for the teaching of the necessity of the minister's intention: if the minister is a mere proxy of Christ, in order that his action may be morally that of Christ, he must bring his intention into harmony with that of the Institutor of the Sacraments. Moreover, in keeping with the views of the Fathers, this theory ascribes to the Church a fairly abundant share in the bestowal of grace through the Sacraments. Christ acts through His Church, represented by the minister. Hence it is essential, in order that the latter may validly confer the sacramental rite, that he should act as minister of the Church. He may be a heretic, a schismatic, an unworthy person, and yet he does not impair the validity of the Sacraments. Nevertheless, he must have the intention to act in the name of the Church. The

[89] *Ibid.*

latter is the necessary intermediary between Christ and us, for Christ accomplishes His sacramental actions through His Church. In fine, the system of moral causality, as interpreted by Cardinal Franzelin, offers to the mind a more living conception of the sacrament. It sets before our eyes Jesus continuing, through His Church, to sanctify men and to bestow the merits of His Passion. This is why men of this age, who are inclined more than ever to look upon Christianity as a life, will feel drawn rather to the system of moral causality.

Wonderful is indeed the richness of dogmatic life, which history shows us in the Church. The Catholic doctrine concerning the efficacy of the Sacraments has sturdily grown, whilst remaining always identical with itself. At the beginning, the Sacraments were looked upon as special means of sanctification. Their efficacy, independent of the minister's dispositions, was fully brought out in the Baptismal controversy and in the discussions with the Donatists. Then, during the Middle Ages, an attempt was made at stating with accuracy the relation of causality, which exists between the rite and grace. With these facts before us, we can hardly imagine on what grounds any one could say that thought is enchained in the Catholic Church.

§ IX. *Grace Produced by the Sacraments.*

An exposition of the teaching relative to the grace produced by the Sacraments [90] is a necessary complement of the history of the dogma of efficacy. For this doctrine is a consequence of the dogma, a more complete explanation of sacramental efficacy. It grew

[90] A special chapter is devoted to the character.

after the Middle Ages, especially at the time of the Council of Trent. We will set forth its essential points, according to Suarez,[91] "in whom"—in the words of Bossuet,—"the whole modern school is heard."

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The Sacraments produce two kinds of graces, the ordinary habitual grace, common to all; and the sacramental grace, special to each one of them.

The formal distinction between "sacramental grace" and "the grace of virtues and gifts," that is to say, ordinary habitual grace, dates from the 13th. century,[92] when the theology of grace was completely elaborated.

Habitual grace is Divine life communicated to the soul. Since the Middle Ages, it is conceived dependently on the scholastic psychology which admits a distinction between the substance of the soul and its faculties. Inasmuch as it adheres to the substance of the soul in order to deify it, grace is called sanctifying grace; and inasmuch as it clings to the faculties of the soul in order to make them capable of acting supernaturally, it is identical with the infused virtues. The gifts of the Holy Ghost are connected with the infused virtues.[93] Sanctifying grace, the virtues and the gifts, all this makes up habitual grace, or the state of grace; absolutely all the Sacraments produce it.

Moreover, the traditional teaching informs us that each one of the seven Sacraments has special effects,

[91] *In* 3am *Part.*, qu. 62, art. 4, disp. 7, sect. 2–5.

[92] Alexander of Hales, *Sum. Theol.*, IV, qu. 8, membr. 4; St. Thomas, *S. Theol.*, 3 p., qu. 62, art. 2; St. Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, D. 1, p. 1, qu. 6.

[93] Cf. St. Thomas, *S. Theol.* 1a 2ae, qu. 110, art. 3 et 4.

in keeping with the end for which it was instituted. Nay, as we have seen, it was the effects proper to each sacrament that the Fathers preferred to study. Scholastic Theology calls these special effects of the Sacraments "sacramental grace," and endeavors to determine its nature.

The theologians of the 13th. century taught generally that sacramental grace is a *habitus* distinct from ordinary habitual grace.[94] This *habitus* has for its purpose to perfect the faculties of the soul and to fit them to fulfil the end of each sacrament. This doctrine found its justification in the theological teaching of that time concerning the reasons that prompted Christ to institute the Sacraments. The Savior intended to provide mankind with remedies, so as to heal the wounds with which it had been afflicted by sin.[95] Sacramental grace consists in a kind of partial restitution of the gifts of integrity which man possessed in the state of innocence. Thus it repairs the disasters of the original fall.

Cardinal Cajetan[96] opposed vigorously this doctrine, which multiplied useless entities. In his eyes sacramental grace consists simply in a right to receive, in due time, actual graces necessary for obtaining the end of each sacrament. The special end of each sacrament is obtained by repeated acts of Christian life. That all of them may be performed, these acts demand many actual graces placed gradually one after the other in the life of the Christian, and sacra-

[94] St. Thomas, *IV Sent.*, D. 1, qu. 1, art. 4, qu. 5.— However, St. Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, D. I, p. 1, art. 1, qu. 6, teaches the identity of sacramental and habitual grace.

[95] St. Thomas, *S. Theol.*, 3 p., qu. 65, art. 1; St. Bonaventure, *Brevil.*, pars 6, cap. iii.

[96] *In* 3am *Part.*, qu. 62, art. 2.

mental grace confers precisely the right to receive, in due time, these necessary graces.

Suarez aims at reconciling the scholastics of old with Cajetan. He admits that sacramental grace is ordinary habitual grace, possessing, however, a special efficacy which is in keeping with the end of each sacrament and which secures special helps for the future. Baptism is intended to regenerate the soul: hence it imparts habitual grace producing the supernatural regeneration of the baptized Christian, to whom graces of Christian life are secured for the future. Confirmation strengthens the soul, the Eucharist feeds it. The sacrament of Penance has for its purpose to give new life to the sinner: its sacramental grace is, then, habitual grace bringing about the resurrection and the healing of the sinner, and strengthening him beforehand against any relapse.[97] Extreme Unction refreshes the sick in view of the final struggle. Orders impart the graces necessary for the worthy exercise of priestly functions; Matrimony gives to husband and wife the helps they need to fulfil all the duties proper to their state. Modern theologians are divided between the view of Suarez and that of Cajetan.[98]

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The most interesting part of the teaching of Suarez refers to the way and to the measure in which these two kinds of graces are produced by the Sacraments. It shows us most manifestly in what way the Church knows how to live her sacramental dogmas.

[97] SUAREZ, *Ibid.*, sect. 3.

[98] FRANZELIN, *op cit.*, th. XI, schol. 3, adopts the doctrine of Suarez; CH. PESCH, *Prael. dogmat.*, **t.** vi, p. 52, that of Cajetan.

The Council of Trent defined that the Sacraments of the New Law confer grace to all those who do not place any obstacle to it through lack of proper dispositions. Hence the Sacraments of the living produce an increase of grace, since their reception demands the state of grace; the Sacraments of the dead produce the first grace, since they are intended to bring the subject from the state of sin to that of holiness. Suarez removes some doubts still entertained in his time, as to the production of the first grace by the Sacraments of the dead.[99]

However, the Sacraments of the dead may produce an increase of grace in those who receive them, with a conscience free from mortal sin. For he who approaches a sacrament of the dead with a pure conscience, far from placing any obstacle to the production of grace, brings to it, on the contrary, excellent dispositions.[1] If the Sacraments of the dead produce an increase of grace in the subject who is already in the state of grace, can we say also that the Sacraments of the living confer the first grace in some cases?

In the time of Suarez, this question was much disputed. Some answered it peremptorily in the negative: the Sacraments of the living were not instituted to forgive sins and impart the first grace; moreover any one that approaches a sacrament of the living in a state of grievous sin places certainly an obstacle to the production of grace. In spite of the strength of these reasons, Suarez adopts the contrary view, which

[99] Suarez alludes to the opinion of the ancient scholastics according to whom perfect contrition was necessary to the adult, in order to receive Baptism and Penance. *Ibid.*, sect. 2.

[1] Suarez, *Ibid.*— Hence the practice of frequent confession is fully justified.

he calls "magis pia et probabilior," and which many theologians followed, after St. Thomas. The Sacraments of the living produce the first grace, when the subject, guilty of a grievous fault, approaches the sacrament in good faith, that is to say, with the invincible ignorance of his fault, and with attrition. Suarez and his followers think that, in these conditions, there is no obstacle to the production of grace.[2] This view has been generally adopted, and it is now regarded as a well-grounded opinion and as one that may be followed in practice.

Another consequence of the dogma of the efficacy pertains to the amount of grace produced by the Sacraments. As regards the production of grace, the dispositions of the subject are conditions *sine quibus non,* as it were; they aim at removing the obstacles that might oppose the action of the sacrament. It seems, then, that the amount of grace imparted by the same sacrament must be in proportion to the perfection of the dispositions of the subject who receives that sacrament. When Christians equally disposed receive the same sacrament, they will receive also the same amount of grace; that amount will not be the same, when the dispositions also are unequal. This is the teaching of Suarez and of most theologians of his epoch.[3]

Although the system adopted by Suarez regarding sacramental causality hardly agrees with the reviviscence of the Sacraments, the learned theologian does not hesitate to defend the reviviscence. The strength of tradition challenges all theological theories, it al-

[2] Suarez, *Ibid.*
[3] Suarez, *Ibid.*, sect. 5.

ways triumphs, sometimes in spite of system! Like St. Augustine, Suarez teaches [4] the reviviscence of Baptism, and also of the other two Sacraments which produce a character. In fact, these Sacraments cannot be repeated, and the grace they confer is necessary that their end may be obtained. For a similar reason, Matrimony and Extreme Unction must revive, as to grace, if they have been received without the proper dispositions; Matrimony cannot be repeated in the lifetime of husband and wife, nor Extreme Unction in the same sickness and in the same danger of death. Suarez acknowledges that even Penance may revive, supposing — what is improbable — that this sacrament may be valid without producing grace. There is no obligation, he says, to confess twice one's sins; should it happen that these are not forgiven by a valid, but unfruitful absolution, they will be forgiven when the penitent places himself in the requisite dispositions. As to the Eucharistic Communion, Suarez declared that its reviviscence is more than doubtful.[5]

But, in order that a sacrament, which was received with insufficient dispositions, may revive, some conditions are required. With a view to determine them, Suarez proposes two hypotheses: the sacrament was valid and unfruitful, because the subject approached it either with the consciousness of being insufficiently prepared — in which case he commits a sacrilege — or without being aware of the insufficiency of his dispositions. In the former hypothesis, the condition of reviviscence is perfect contrition, or attrition with sacra-

[4] SUAREZ, *In* 3am *Part.* quaest. 69, art. 10, disput. 28, sect. 4.
[5] *Ibid.*, sect. 6.

mental absolution: because reviviscence cannot take place as long as the sacrilege is not forgiven. In the latter, attrition suffices: in fact, the dispositions necessary for reviviscence are the same as those that were necessary, at the time when the sacrament was received, to make this reception fruitful; now, according to a well founded opinion, attrition and good faith suffice, in order that even a sacrament of the living may produce the first grace.

Such are, according to Suarez, the conditions of the reviviscence of Baptism.[6] He insinuates that these conditions are the same for the other Sacraments.[7] Besides resting on plausible reasons this doctrine is also confirmed by the authority of St. Thomas,[8] who holds the reviviscence of Baptism and of the other Sacraments that produce a character. During the 14th. and 15th. centuries, the teaching of the Angelic Doctor was applied to most of the Sacraments.

The Christian finds, then, in the Sacraments, inexhaustible sources of Divine life, wonderfully efficacious means of salvation, which unbelievers, in their moments of anguish, rightly envy the followers of Jesus.

> His heinous crime to priest confessed,
> Peace reigns within the murderer's breast;
> Far lesser deeds to God I tell,
> Yet cannot feel that all is well.[9]

[6] Disput. 28, sect. 4.
[7] *Ibid.*, sect. 6.
[8] St. Thomas, *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 4, qu. 3, art. 2.
[9] Sully-Prudhomme, *La Confession.*

CHAPTER IV

THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER

Although the character is not an effect common to all the Sacraments, it is customary, however, to treat of it in a general study on the theology of the Sacraments. The development of the doctrine of the character is besides intimately connected with the rest of the doctrine on the Sacraments. But, above all, one could hardly have a sufficiently complete idea of the history of sacramental efficacy, if he did not realize the place which the character occupies in it.

§ I. *The Teaching of the Church.*

According to the definition of the Council of Trent, Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders impress upon the soul a character, that is to say a spiritual and indelible sign which renders a second reception of any one of these three Sacraments impossible.[1] The character produced by the sacrament of Holy Orders constitutes irrevocably those who receive it in the sacerdotal state; priests of the New Testament validly ordained cannot then, in any case, return to the lay state, as it was held by the Protestants condemned in the 23d. session.[2]

[1] *Sess.* VII, *De sacramentis in gen.*, can. 9: Si quis dixerit, in tribus Sacramentis, Baptismo scilicet, Confirmatione et Ordine, non imprimi characterem in anima, hoc est, signum quoddam spirituale et indelibile, unde ea iterari non possunt, A. S.

[2] Can. 4, cap. iv. Cf. A. THEINER, *op. cit.*, t. ii, p. 133.— The

The Council does not give more explanation; we shall study later the attempts made by theologians to determine the nature of this character.

For the time being, it is important to distinguish it carefully from grace. The latter may be lost; the character, on the contrary, is indelible: it adheres to the soul all through the present life, and although the Church has not defined it, nothing shows that it disappears at the threshold of the future life.

The character imparts some aptitudes. The baptismal character makes one fit to receive the other Sacraments: as a matter of fact, any one who is not baptized cannot receive them validly. The Eucharist alone might exist in a soul not adorned with the character of a Christian, for the consecration and the real presence are independent of the reception of this sacrament; however, it would produce in that soul no grace, no supernatural effect. The priestly character gives the active power of administering the Sacraments to others; it invests the priest with a real spiritual might and with a real supernatural fecundity. Grace, on the contrary, confers no sacramental power; it merely sanctifies the soul, makes it pleasing in the sight of God and capable of enjoying, after death, the happiness of the elect. As long as it is not lost, grace is a sure token of salvation. Taken by itself, the character offers no guarantee of

doctrine condemned by the above canon is that of LUTHER, *De capt. babyl.*, De sacr. ordinis, t. ii, p. 299: Quantum ergo e Scripturis docemur, cum ministerium sit, id quod nos sacerdotium vocamus, prorsus non video, qua ratione rursus nequeat laicus fieri semel sacerdos factus, cum a laico nihil differat, nisi ministerio. . . . Nam commentum illud caracteris indelebilis, jam olim irrisum est. Concedo ut caracterem hunc Papa imprimat ignorante Christo

this kind; unless it is accompanied with grace, it cannot open for us the gates of Heaven.

Moreover, grace may be obtained even though the sacrament is not received, for instance as when a man is justified by perfect contrition; whilst, in order to receive the character, one must have recourse to the sacramental rite. The catechumen who would have been justified by charity, must nevertheless be baptized in order to be able to receive the other Sacraments of the Church.

The Reformers denied altogether the doctrine of the character, under pretence that it was foreign to the teaching of the Bible and of the Fathers:

"Quod de charactere indelebili fabulantur, ex eadem [indoctorum monachorum] prodiit officina: nam veteribus hoc ignotum fuit, et magis consentaneum est incantationibus magicis, quam sanae Evangelii doctrinae. Eadem ergo facilitate repudiabitur, qua excogitatum fuit." [3]

Thus, the dogma of the production of the character is a mere human invention, a mistake due to ecclesiastical ignorance. According to the Protestant theologian, Martin Chemnitz [4] (†1586), the first author who spoke of it was Pope Innocent III. In fact, the mistake was on the side of the Reformers; for, some eight centuries before Innocent III, St. Augustine had exposed quite clearly the theology of the sacramental character in his discussions with the Donatists. On this point the representatives of Liberal Protestantism do justice to St. Augustine. However, far from looking upon his teaching as an exposition of the traditional practice of the Church, they see

[3] CALVIN, *Antidotum concilii Tridentini*, ad sess. VII, can. 9. Cf. LUTHER, *De Captivitate babyl.*, De sacr. ordinis, *Ibid.*

[4] *Examen concilii Tridentini*, P. 2, in can. 9, sess. VII.

in it a merely polemical device, by which the holy Doctor strove to solve the contradictions found in his sacramental system.[5]

These Protestant errors are easily accounted for by the fact that neither in Scripture nor in ancient authors do we find a formal teaching about the doctrine of the character. It is to the life of the early Church and to her practices that we must apply to find the principles which contain that doctrine and which, by growing, will manifest it to the Catholic consciousness. Now, positive theology alone, based as it is on the doctrine of the development of dogma, is able to accomplish this task. Protestant theologians who oppose *a priori* any dogmatic progress, can only be mistaken and considered "inventors" of dogma, authors who, like St. Augustine, simply draw from the practice of the Church the dogmatic explanation which it implies.

The custom, as old as Christianity itself, of not repeating Baptism, Confirmation and Order, at least when they had been conferred in the Catholic Church, as well as the use of the term *Sphragis* (Σφραγίς, seal) to designate Baptism and Confirmation, implied on the part of Christians, the belief that something definitive was produced by these three Sacraments. This implicit faith of the early ages was brought out by St. Augustine who claims, as we shall see later on, merely to explain the custom of the non-repetition, by means of his doctrine of the character. Finally, after setting forth again in its full light the dogma which the warm discussions concerning the value of the ordination of intruders and simoniacs during the early part of the Middle Ages had ob-

[5] A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 5, pp. 157 ff.

scured, the theologians of the 13th. century endeavored to define the nature of the sacramental character by means of Aristotelian philosophy and of the doctrine of Christ's priesthood.

Such is, in its outlines, the development of the dogma on which we are now engaged.

§ II. *From the Beginning of the Church to St. Augustine — Three Sacraments Not Repeated — The Doctrine of the Sphragis.*

The non-repetition, in the primitive Church, of Baptism and of its complement, Confirmation, when they were deemed validly conferred, is an indisputable historical fact, which was illustrated most clearly by the Baptismal controversy. Both rebaptizers and anti-rebaptizers agreed that, when validly administered, Baptism cannot be repeated. The dispute bore exclusively on the conditions required for the validity of Baptism; some demanding, on the part of the minister, orthodoxy of faith; others declaring it unnecessary. Hence St. Cyprian and his followers indignantly protested against the charge of rebaptism which was flung at them. They did not *re*baptize the converts from heresy, they baptized them, since, in their eyes, the sacrament received in heresy was void.

"Nos autem dicimus eos qui inde [ab haeresi] veniunt non rebaptizari apud nos sed baptizari. Neque enim accipiunt illic aliquid ubi nihil est, sed veniunt ad nos ut hic accipiant ubi et gratia et veritas omnis est, quia et gratia et veritas una est." [6]

Any valid Baptism must not be repeated: this is the

[6] St. Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxi, 1.

steady teaching of the Church during the first centuries.

Nor was the rite that conferred the Holy Ghost and completed Baptism repeated, when it was looked upon as valid; but in the time of St. Cyprian, and even for several centuries after, it was considered such, only when it had been administered by the Catholic Church. For even the churches which acknowledged the value of the Baptism of heretics, rejected, nevertheless, the rite of Confirmation conferred by them.[7] As our readers remember, St. Cyprian and his friends availed themselves of this fact to charge the anti-rebaptizers with inconsistency.[8] It seemed to them that there was no more reason for holding the value of the Baptism of heretics than for holding the value of the rest of their initiation.

Even as late as the 5th. century, we find the custom of repeating the rite of Confirmation that had been performed by heretics. The seventh Canon of Constantinople prescribes to reconcile the heretics whose Baptism is accepted, by marking them and consecrating them "with Holy Chrism on the face, the eyes, the nose, the mouth and the ears," whilst this formula was recited: The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost.[9] In Gaul, the second synod of Arles, held in 443 or 452, commands to reconcile the Bonosians by the unction with chrism and the laying-on of hands.[10] The eighth Canon of the first synod, held in that town in 314, had previously decided that hands should be im-

[7] DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship*, 1904, p. 340.

[8] *Epist.* lxxiii, 6.

[9] HEFELE, *Hist. of Councils*, vol. II, p. 367. This is the very rite of confirmation in use among the Greeks.

[10] HEFELE, vol. III, p. 169. See MORIN, *De administ. Sacram. Paenit*, lib. IX, cap. 9–13.

posed on the converts from heresy, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.[11] Gennadius of Marseilles[12] who lived towards the end of the 5th. century and the Benedictine Walafrid Strabo[13] (†849) testify the same practice. Hefele[14] thinks that the famous letter of Pope St. Stephen to St. Cyprian contains an allusion to the repetition of the rite which imparted the Holy Ghost, when conferred by heretics. As a matter of fact, this was the meaning in which the letter was taken by St. Cyprian and his followers.

However, in the countries where the Roman rite was followed, the reconciliation of heretics was made, at an early period, without the unction of chrism, by the imposition of hands alone, or even by a mere profession of faith. This Pope St. Gregory the Great states expressly in his letter to Quirinus,[15] and that Roman custom, he declares, is ancient (ab antiqua patrum institutione didicimus). Hence it was not in all churches that the rite of the Confirmation of heretics was looked upon as null and therefore repeated.

Nevertheless, the cases in which this rite was actually repeated are so many, that their number can but impress a theologian and command his attention. It seems now certain that an heretical minister can validly give Confirmation; on the other hand, the ancient practice of the Church seems contrary to this belief. How are we to reconcile the doctrine with the facts?

The celebrated Jesuit Maldonatus (†1583) solved the antinomy by declaring that, differently from Bap-

[11] HEFELE, vol. I, p. 188.
[12] *De Ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*, 52.
[13] *De rebus ecclesiasticis*, 26.
[14] *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 112.
[15] *Epist.* xi, 67.

tism, Confirmation conferred by an heretical minister, is null: for Confirmation is intended to impart the Holy Spirit, and, according to the teaching of the whole Christian antiquity, the Holy Spirit cannot be given outside the Catholic Church.[16] John Morin records this view and does not condemn it. "Quid in hac assertione sit periculi perspicue non video."[17] The *Dictionnaire de théologie* of Goschler[18] also speaks of it with indulgence. True, it is not opposed to the formal definitions of the Church, since the Council of Trent[19] decided only on the validity of Baptism conferred by heretics; but it disagrees with the common teaching of the Schools concerning the conditions of validity required in the minister of the Sacraments.

Hence Chardon chose rather to say that, by using the rite of Confirmation for the reconciliation of heretics, the Church did not intend to give them again this sacrament, but merely to impart to them the Holy Spirit: "If I am allowed to express my views on so intricate a subject, I may say plainly that in most churches some heretics were received into the Catholic unity with the same rites as those of the sacrament of Confirmation; this also I say that it was not this

[16] *Disputationes de sacramentis, De confirmatione, quaest.* 1 et 2. *Opera theologica,* Paris, 1677, t. i, pp. 76, 79: Proprius autem effectus confirmationis est dare Spiritum Sanctum, quod omnes antiqui contenderunt fieri non posse apud haereticos . . . quod ea confirmatio quae a catholicis episcopis data fuit, non debeat repeti, semper fuit certum . . . : tamen an confirmatio data ab episcopis haereticis repeti debeat in Ecclesia catholica non ita fuit certum; imo existimo in tota veteri Ecclesia fuisse repetitam, quia non existimabatur esse vera confirmatio.

[17] Morin, *op. cit.,* lib. IX, cap. xi, 6.

[18] Article "Sacrement."

[19] *Sess.* VII, *De baptismo,* can. 4.

sacrament which was administered to them, for when using those rites for the reconciliation of heretics, the Church authorities did not intend to confirm them a second time, but merely to obtain for them the grace of the Holy Spirit, that they might be united interiorly and profitably to the body of the Church." [20]

This solution seems arbitrary, for the intention is determined by the end the ministers of the Church had in view, in repeating the rite of Confirmation, and this end was the same as in the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation to Catholics, namely, to impart the Holy Spirit.

In truth the problem becomes far more simple, if we bear in mind that at that time the sacramental nature of Confirmation was not yet sufficiently brought out and that, owing to the still imperfect state of sacramentary theology, the conditions of the validity of the Sacraments had not been determined as accurately as might have been desired. The several instances in which the rite of Confirmation was repeated interest the history of the dogma of efficacy, as well as the history of the dogma of the sacramental character. They belong to the same category as the repetitions of the Ordination that had been conferred by intruders and simoniacs during the early part of the Middle Ages, and they also are accounted for by the undefined state of the sacramental doctrine at the time. Here it may suffice to remark that Confirmation was not repeated, when considered valid, that is to say when conferred in the Catholic Church. Now on this point, all agree.

Strong and many indeed are the motives why Bap-

[20] *Histoire de la Confirmation,* chap. v.

tism and Confirmation, once validly administered, should not be repeated. They are the Sacraments of Christian initiation, and no initiation is ever repeated. He who is baptized and confirmed is incorporated into Christ, shares in His redemption, lives with His life, is a member of the Christian society of which he has become a subject. This initiatory consecration produces something definitive. This is why those among the faithful that had lost the grace of their Baptism by grievous sins and consequently had been temporarily excluded from the Christian society, were reinstated in it, not by another initiation, but by penitential exercises followed by a solemn reconciliation. Hence, in the eyes of the Church of the early ages, the Sacraments of the initiation produced something that is not to be repeated.

Later on, St. Augustine will merely develop this view still confused at the time which we are now considering, when he explains the traditional practice of the non-repetition of Baptism and of Order by the "consecration" they impart to man:

"Utrumque enim [baptismus et ordinatio] sacramentum est; et quadam consecratione utrumque homini datur; illud cum baptizatur; istud cum ordinatur; ideoque in Catholica utrumque non licet iterari." [21]

For Ordination, when looked upon as valid, was repeated in the primitive Church no more than Baptism and Confirmation. It placed forever anyone who received it among the ministers of the Church; on this account it had a permanent effect.

On this point a few explanations are needed that

[21] *Contra epist. Parmen.*, ii, 28.

we may not overestimate the bearing of this fact on the development of the doctrine of the sacramental character. When a cleric, owing to his unworthiness, deserved to be deprived of his functions, certainly he was not reordained, if later on the ecclesiastical authorities deemed it advisable to restore him to his former charge. But, according to John Morin,[22] until the year 350 this restoration occurred very seldom for the members of the clergy who, after their ordination, had passed over to heresy and had come back afterwards to the Catholic Church. They were received among the laity. This measure was merely disciplinary; nothing shows that we should look upon it as an expression of the belief that a minister who becomes a heretic loses the powers of his ordination. Besides, St. Augustine testifies that, in his time, the bishops that had been converted from heresy were sometimes reinstated in the functions they had exercised before their apostasy, and yet were never reordained.[23]

Hence we may affirm without fear of contradiction that the ordination conferred in the Catholic Church was never repeated legitimately during the early centuries. Bishops, priests and deacons who had themselves reordained, were deposed, as well as the minister who had consented to repeat the laying-on of hands.[24]

Was the same practice observed regarding the ordinations conferred in the heretical sects? Did the Church, in the beginning, consider valid all these ordinations? Most authors think that during the first

[22] *De sacr. Eccles. ordinat.*, pars III[a], exercit., V, cap. x.
[23] *Contra epist. Parmen.*, ii, 28.
[24] *Apostolic Canons*, can. 68; FUNK, *Didascalia et Constit. Apostol.*, vol. I, p. 585.

five centuries, any ordination performed according to the ritual of the Church by heretics, schismatics, intruders or those that had been excommunicated, was deemed valid and was not repeated.[25] However, John Morin is less positive: he quotes several texts which might lead one to infer that in several Churches the ordination of heretics was not accepted.[26] At all events, supposing that heretical ordinations were at times repeated during the early ages, this repetition, like that of the heretical Baptism, can be accounted for by the imperfect state of the sacramental doctrine; it proves that the ideas about the conditions of the validity of the Sacraments were still rather confused. It would be a mistake, however, to think that, because of these instances of repetition, theologians are not justified in looking to the practice of the Church for the basis of the doctrine of character. For if some ordinations were repeated — and this must be said also of Baptism and of Confirmation — it was because they were looked upon as null. Had not this been the case, nobody would have ever thought of repeating these Sacraments; it was always understood that, when they were considered valid, nothing was to be done over again. Out of this practice, as much as out of the teaching concerning the *Sphragis,* the doctrine of the character will be developed.

* * *

The use of the word σφραγίζειν to signify certain operations of God in the soul, is of Apostolic origin. St. Paul uses this term in the Second Epistle to the

[25] Many, *De sacra ordinatione,* p. 57.
[26] *Op. cit., ibid.,* cap. vii.

Corinthians[27] when speaking of the Apostolic calling with which, as with a seal, he was marked by God, together with Sylvanus and Timothy. In a similar sense, the Savior declares in the sixth chapter[28] of St. John's Gospel, that He was marked with a seal by God the Father.

It is most probable, also, that St. Paul designates, under the symbol of a seal, the action of the Holy Ghost in the baptized Christian.[29] When reminding the Ephesians of their altogether gratuitous calling to faith and to the participation in the blessings of Christ's redemption, he tells them that they received a pledge of the future heavenly inheritance in the gift of the Holy Ghost, which stamped them with its seal when they believed the preaching of the Gospel. During the Apostolic age, all those that heard the word of truth and believed in it, were immediately baptized and received the Holy Ghost through the laying-on of hands. Thus they were "marked with the seal" of the Divine Spirit "unto the day of [final] redemption."[30] Those that receive this seal, then, have a right to salvation; and since, as St. Paul declares quite often, it is Baptism that imparts salvation, we may think that, in the Apostle's mind, this spiritual seal is in close relation with Baptism and with the rite which conferred the Holy Spirit.

This inference, which remains more or less problematic, is confirmed by the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, in which the term *sphragis* is currently applied to designate Baptism and its effects. No doubt,

[27] *II Cor.*, i, 22.
[28] vi, 27.
[29] *Eph.*, i, 13.
[30] *Id.*, iv, 30.

these early authors do not ascribe the origin of this application to the Pauline Epistles — this will be done only in the 4th. century.[31] But the almost universal mention of the baptismal *sphragis* in the 2d. century can scarcely be accounted for, had it been altogether unknown to the Apostolic Age.

Hermas calls *sphragis* sometimes the baptismal ablution,[32] sometimes too its effects.[33] The *Secunda Clementis* exhorts the faithful to preserve immaculate the *sphragis,* that is to say, not to sin any more after Baptism: for those who will preserve it intact will obtain life everlasting,[34] whilst those who will violate it will be lost.[35] We must probably see an allusion to the state of the baptized Christian in the "gleaming seal" worn by the people of Rome whom Abercius visited.[36] The same terminology is found in the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles. Following on the footsteps of his predecessors, Clement of Alexandria applies the name *sphragis of the Lord* to the Baptism[37] conferred on the young man who had been converted by St. John, and that of *sphragis* to the rite which imparted the Holy Ghost.[38]

The Latin Fathers of the first half of the 3d. century

[31] St. John Chrysostom thinks that *II Cor.* i, 32 and *Ephes.* i, 13, mention the baptismal *Sphragis.* So also does St. Ambrose, *De Spirit,* i, 78.

[32] *Shepherd, Sim.* ix, 16.

[33] *Sim.* viii, 6[3].

[34] *II Clem.,* viii, 6.

[35] *Id.,* vii, 6.

[36] *Inscription of Abercius,* verse 9. [For an English translation of this inscription, Cf. LOWRIE, *Monuments of the Early Church,* pp. 235–236; cf. *Catholic Encyclopedia,* art. *Abercius.* Tr.]

[37] *Quis dives salvetur,* 42.

[38] *Stromat.,* ii, 3.

designate also the two Sacraments of the Christian initiation by equivalent expressions. According to Tertullian, Baptism is the *signaculum* of faith,[39] the seal with which it is marked (obsignata) by the Divine Trinity.[40] For in Baptism, the Christian seems to renounce the pomps of Satan; in case he is unfaithful, he violates the *signaculum* of his faith:

"Hoc [quidquid Deo displicet] erit pompa diaboli, adversus quam in signaculo fidei ejeramus. Caeterum nonne ejeramus et rescindimus signaculum, rescindendo testationem ejus?"[41]

In Confirmation, the body of the Christian is "signed" with the sign of the cross in order to be strengthened.[42] Likewise St. Cyprian declares that, after their Baptism, the neophytes receive the Holy Ghost by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop, accompanied with a prayer, and that they are afterwards fully initiated by the *signaculum* of the Lord. (signaculo dominico consummentur.)[43]

It would be a mistake to see in these various terms a teaching properly so called about the sacramental character. The writers of that remote epoch make no distinction between the effects of Baptism. By the same word, *sphragis,* they designate both what is indelible in these effects and what may be lost through sin; for they consider all of them together and do not

[39] *De spectaculis,* xxiv, 4. Cf. *De pudic.,* 9.

[40] *De bapt.,* vi, 13. Cf. *De paen.,* 6. According to Tertullian, Baptism is the *signaculum* of the troth of the new Christian: it seals the covenant between him and God.

[41] *De spectac.,* 24.

[42] *De resurrect. carnis,* 8.

[43] *Epist.* lxxiii, 9.

think of making an analysis of them. The *sphragis* signifies the state of sanctity in which Baptism and Confirmation place the Christian; and as his sanctity may be destroyed by faults committed after Baptism, the *sphragis* also may be lost. Hence Hermas and the *II^a Clementis* entreat earnestly the Christian not to violate their *sphragis,* and Tertullian, not to " rescind " the *signaculum* of their faith. Nay, according to Hermas, the baptismal *sphragis* is restored by penance in those who had broken it through their sins.[44] The formal distinction between grace and the character then, is unknown at that time; St. Augustine will be the first who states it clearly. Yet it is found, although hidden, in the texts pertaining to the *sphragis* and out of these it will be developed more and more distinctly in the progress of doctrine: this we are going to see in the history of the 4th. century.

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When explaining to the faithful the effects of Baptism and of Confirmation, the Fathers of the 4th. century describe the *sphragis* and the *signaculum,* in terms and by means of comparisons which express a doctrine of the character, to which St. Augustine will have but little to add. We may begin with the Greek Fathers.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (†386) may be looked upon as the representative of the Greek theology of the *sphragis* during the 4th. century. We shall expose his views and complete them, when need be, by those of St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. John Chrysostom, who hold a similar doctrine about the *sphragis.*

[44] *Sim.* viii, 6.

According to the custom of the Apostolic Fathers, Baptism is designated, in the 4th. century, by the term *sphragis.*[45] Yet this word is used chiefly to signify that which is produced in the soul by the sacrament.

The baptismal *sphragis* is the seal with which the Holy Ghost marks the soul, whilst Baptism is being administered (*τὸ καὶ νῦν κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ βαπτίσματος σφραγίζον* [*τὸ Πνεῦμα*] *σου τὴν ψυχήν*).[46] The Spirit which foretold Christ by the Prophets and wrought wonders in the Apostles, even now seals souls in Baptism (*ἐν βαπτίσματι σφραγίζει τὰς ψυχάς*).[47] Like the sheep of a flock, the Jews of old were marked with circumcision; whilst the Christians are stamped with the Spirit, as it behooves children of God.[48]

The properties of the baptismal *sphragis* are described. It is spiritual (*πνευματική*), beneficial to the soul (*σωτηριώδη*), and simply wonderful (*θαυμασία*).[49] It is holy and cannot be destroyed (*ἁγία, ἀκατάλυτος*);[49a] nor can it be erased from the soul, it is indelible (*ἀνεξάλειπτος*).[50]

We can get a glimpse of the idea the Greek Fathers had of the intimate nature of the baptismal *sphragis,* from the study of the comparisons they give of it: comparisons which St. Augustine will take up later on.

The *sphragis* is a seal that protects us, it is a Divine pledge. God marks us with His seal, to show that we

[45] St. Cyril, *Procat.,* 16; St. Greg. Naz., *Orat.* xl, 4, 15.
[46] St. Cyril, *Cat.,* iv, 16.
[47] *Cat.* xvi, 24. Cf. *Cat.* iii, 4; xvii, 35.
[48] St. John Chrys., *In Ephes.,* hom. ii, 2.
[49] St. Cyril, *Cat.,* i, 3.
[49a] *Procatech.,* 16.
[50] *Procatech.,* 17.

belong to Him, and thus to guard us from the inroads of our enemies. A sealed treasure is perfectly safe, it cannot be easily stolen by thieves;[51] a sheep that bears the mark of its master's property, will be left alone; nobody will dare seize it.[52] The formidable dragon will not swallow up the soul stamped with the seal of God, but will flee away from it.[53] Even as the exterminating Angel spared formerly those whose houses bore the sign agreed upon, whilst he struck the others,[54] so also the soul, bearing the seal, the mark of Divine property, will be protected, whilst that which is deprived of it cannot escape perdition.

The *sphragis* is also a distinctive sign of the Christian. It is the mystical impress (μυστικὴ σφραγίς), with which Christ marks the sheep that make up His flock, just as shepherds mark with a sign the sheep that belong to them. If we wish to be placed at the right of the Supreme Pastor and be acknowledged by Him, on the day of judgment, we ought to have recourse to the *sphragis*.[55] Those that bear the mark of Christ the Angels and the demons acknowledge as belonging to the Christian family; whilst, at the sight of this sign, the devils tremble, drop their arms, and take to flight, the Angels, on the contrary, hasten to the Christian, as to a familiar friend (οἰκεῖον).[56] Military commanders give a distinctive mark to their respective soldiers, in order that the latter may recognize one another and not be exposed to most disas-

[51] St. Basil, Hom. XIII. *in Baptisma,* 4; St. Gregory Naz., *Or.* xl, 4.
[52] St. Greg. Naz., *Ibid.,* 15.
[53] St. Cyril, *Cat.,* iii, 12.
[54] St. Basil, *Ibid.* St. Greg. Naz., *l. c.*
[55] St. Cyril, *Cat.,* i, 3.
[56] St. Cyril., *Cat.,* i, 3.

trous mistakes in the heat of the fight. Likewise the *sphragis* serves to distinguish, in the fight against the passions, those that are on the side of God, and those that are on the side of the evil spirit; it points out to the Angels those whom they ought to assist;[57] and if, whilst the battle is going on, there are deserters, the *sphragis* manifests their shame to the sight of all men.[58]

The *sphragis* is then a spiritual, beneficial and indelible seal, with which the Holy Spirit marks the souls of Christians, in order to protect them and to show that the faithful are a part of the flock and of the army of Christ. Such is the teaching of the Greek Fathers about the *sphragis*.

This teaching concerns not only the *sphragis* of Baptism, but also that of Confirmation. For when they set forth their teaching, the Fathers have in view the Christian, that is to say, him who is baptized and confirmed; and their remarks concerning the two *sphragis* mingle together in such a way that at times it becomes impossible to distinguish them.

But when the writers of the 4th. century speak of the unction with chrism, which follows Baptism, they mention expressly the *sphragis* of Confirmation. Whilst the chrism flows on the forehead of the neophyte, St. Cyril of Jerusalem declares, the *sphragis* of the communication of the Holy Spirit is produced in him.[59] The sacramental formula of Confirmation:

[57] St. Basil, *l. c.*

[58] St. John Chrysostom, *In II ad Cor.*, hom. iii, 7.

[59] St. Cyril, *Cat. myst.*, iv, 7; *Cat.*, xviii, 33; St. Greg. Naz., *Or.* xl, 15; Didymus, *De Trinitate*, ii, 1: Ἡ σωτήριος σφραγίς, καὶ τὸ θεῖον χρίσμα: Cf. ii, 14; St. Athanas., *Epist. I ad Serapionem*, 23: Χρίσμα λέγεται τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἔστι σφραγίς.

Σφραγὶς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Πνεύματος ἁγίου, which has been used among the Greeks since the 4th. century at the latest,[60] contains an allusion to the *sphragis* of this sacrament. The prayers for the blessing of chrism, found in the liturgical documents of the 4th. century, speak also of the *sphragis*. In the formula of the *Euchologium of Serapion,*[61] the celebrant asks God that the baptized neophytes, who are about to receive the unction of chrism, "may become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and that, being confirmed by that seal (*σφραγῖδι*)" they may remain immovable and strong in the faith. The *Apostolic Constitutions*[62] calls chrism the seal of the promises of a Christian (*τὸ δὲ μύρον σφραγὶς τῶν συνθηκῶν*).

Hence the distinction between the *sphragis* of Baptism and that of Confirmation is strongly emphasized in the documents of the 4th. century.

When studying this lofty doctrine, we may be tempted to believe that the Greek Fathers set forth a fully explicit teaching concerning the character. Yet they fail to presen a clear-cut distinction between grace and the *sphragis*. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, exposing to the catechumens the dispositions necessary to receive Baptism, tells them that the *sphragis* is given only to those that are sincerely converted. Only they whose physical qualities enable them to be good soldiers, are enlisted in the army. So also God makes a choice, when he recruits the soldiers of His army: any one who is unworthy, who is insincere, is rejected; only they that are honest and sincere are incorporated

[60] St. Cyril of Jer., *Cat.*, xviii, 33; *Euchologium of Serapion*, xxv, 2 (ed. Funk).

[61] xxv, 2.

[62] vii, 22, 2 (ed. Funk). Cf. iii, 17, 2.

and receive the beneficial and wonderful *sphragis*.[63] Hence, if Baptism is received unworthily, the *sphragis* is conferred no more than grace. St. Cyril did not draw a sharp distinction between the *sphragis* and grace: a distinction which St. Augustine will strongly emphasize so as to show that Baptism received in an unworthy manner, always produces the character, and yet does not impart sanctity. But although St. Cyril did not clearly state this distinction, are we not justified in saying that he had a certain notion of it, and that if he did not formulate it explicitly, it was simply because no favorable opportunity offered itself?

The Greek Fathers, whose doctrine about the baptismal *sphragis* is so abundant, have much less to say concerning the priestly character. The most striking teaching is set forth by St. Gregory of Nyssa.[64] The holy Doctor compares the priestly consecration to the blessing of baptismal water, to the consecration of altars on which the Eucharist is celebrated, and to the consecration of the Eucharist itself. These various consecrations modify, set apart from profane use and sanctify the objects which they reach. Ordination does something similar. It segregates the chosen one from the laity, places him among the ecclesiastical leaders and renders him capable of celebrating the Christian mysteries. An unseen transformation takes place in his soul through the Divine power; henceforth he will perform wonders, superior even to those related of Moses and of the Prophets.

This description of the effects of the priestly conse-

[63] *Cat.* i, 3. Οὐ δίδωσι [ὁ Κύριος] τὰ ἅγια τοῖς κυσίν, ἀλλ' ὅπου βλέπει τὴν ἀγαθὴν συνείδησιν, ἐκεῖ τὴν σωτηριώδη δίδωσι σφραγῖδα τὴν θαυμασίαν.

[64] *In baptismum Christi* (*P.G.*, xlvi, 581).

cration fits quite well the "character" of Ordination. It is, so to speak, the traditional link joining together the whole ancient belief summed up by the Bishop of Nyssa and the Augustinian doctrine. Yet our readers will not fail to realize that the comparisons Gregory uses to define the effects of Ordination, imply that his ideas regarding the priestly "character" were still confused.

In the West, the teaching of the Latin writers of the 4th. century about the *spiritale signaculum* is not so abundant as that of the Greek Fathers concerning the *sphragis*. St. Ambrose [65] and the author of the *De Sacramentis* [66] allude to it in connection with the rite of Confirmation, especially with the sign of the cross, traced by the Bishop with chrism on the forehead of the newly baptized Christian.

However, it is in his treatise *De Spiritu Sancto* [67] that we must look for the mind of the Bishop of Milan regarding this *signaculum*. Whilst the body of the neophyte is marked externally, his heart is stamped internally with the Holy Spirit. Hence it is by and in the Holy Ghost that we are marked with this spiritual sign. This sign is produced in us, in order that we may preserve the brightness, the image and the grace of the Spirit (ut splendorem atque imaginem ejus et gratiam tenere possimus: quod est utique spiritale signaculum), that our souls may bear the Divine image and likeness (ut Spiritus sanctus exprimat in nobis imaginis caelestis effigiem) and, that, in the words of St. Peter (*II Pet.*, I, 4) we may partake of the Divine nature. The Prophet teaches us

[65] *De myst.*, 42.
[66] iii, 8.
[67] Lib. I, cap. vi.

that this *signaculum* is spiritual and interior, when he says: *Signatum est in nobis lumen vultus tui, Domine; dedisti laetitiam in corde meo* (*Ps. IV, 7*).

The distinction between the "character" and grace is not yet quite distinct. The honor of having exposed it in its fulness belongs decidedly to St. Augustine. Yet how pregnant with meaning is the doctrine of St. Ambrose and of the Greek Fathers! It will be easy for the Bishop of Hippo to draw from their teaching a real theology of the sacramental character.

§ III. *The Augustinian Doctrine.*

The texts of St. Augustine that speak of the character have been placed before the reader, or rather pointed out in the previous chapter; for the doctrine of the character is an essential part of Augustine's sacramental system. Here we shall merely draw from his works and expose in a synthetic manner, the views of the holy Doctor regarding the character of Baptism and of Ordination.

St. Augustine was firmly convinced that according to the practice of the Church, Baptism, even when conferred by heretics and schismatics, must not be renewed since to rebaptize any one, especially a Catholic, was to commit a most heinous crime:

"Rebaptizare igitur haereticum hominem, qui haec sanctitatis signa perceperit quae christiana tradidit disciplina, omnino peccatum est: rebaptizare autem catholicum, immanissimum scelus est." [68]

It is far better to die at the hands of the Donatists

[68] *Ep.* xxii, 2.

than to let oneself be rebaptized.[69] On the other hand, St. Augustine was equally convinced that Baptism, when received outside the Catholic Church, does not remit sins nor impart grace: it obtains these results, only when the culprit repents, enters the Catholic unity and receives the rite of reconciliation.

Thus the opportunity to distinguish the two effects of Baptism offered itself providentially to the Bishop of Hippo. The ecclesiastical practice of not repeating Baptism is explained by the fact that Baptism, administered according to the essential rite, produces always and everywhere the indelible character. Hence the Church looks upon the convert from heresy or schism, as validly baptized and as incapable of being rebaptized, although, in her eyes, he has not obtained the forgiveness of sins nor grace. Thus the sharp distinction between the character of Baptism and grace manifested itself to the Christian consciousness, and was set forth as an explanation of the practice of "no rebaptism." Once more, dogma arose from the sacramental life of the Church.

As a matter of fact, when St. Augustine exposes his doctrine of the character, he claims only to justify the traditional practice. His teaching about the character tallies perfectly with that of the Greek Fathers regarding the *sphragis,* since in the exposition of his doctrine he uses the same comparisons as they did.[70]

[69] *Contra litt. Petil.,* ii, 191.

[70] St. Augustine was probably acquainted, through St. Ambrose, with St. Basil's writings, from the time of his conversion. It is certain, at any rate, he had read some writings of St. Basil and of St. John Chrysostom when he opposed the Pelagians towards the end of his life.

The convert from heresy is not rebaptized, since he received in the Sacrament the character of the Lord,[71] which cannot be destroyed. He is a sheep of Christ, astray from the fold. He must be brought back to the sheepfold, but his character must not be touched: even as the shepherd brings back to the fold the wandering sheep, and does not impress on it the "character dominicus" with which it had been marked:

"Sic enim error corrigendus est ovis, ut non in ea corrumpatur signaculum Redemptoris."[72]

The sacrament adheres just as closely to the baptized Christian as the military "character" to the soldier's body. After the *stigma* has been unlawfully imprinted on a man that does not belong to the army, it is valid, nor could it be repeated in case this outsider should take up the military career.[73] So also the baptismal character impressed by the heretical deserter must not be repeated, for it is the character, not of heresy, but of our leader, the Lord Jesus:

"Nam si Donatus quando schisma fecit, in nomine Donati baptizaret, desertoris characterem infigeret . . . nunc vero ipse desertor characterem fixit imperatoris sui. Deus et Dominus noster Jesus Christus quaerit desertorem, delet erroris crimen, sed non exterminat characterem."[74]

Thus the doctrine of the character is set forth by St. Augustine always as an explanation of the practice of no rebaptism.

[71] *Epist.* clxxiii, 3: Et vos [Donatistae] oves Christi estis, characterem dominicum portatis in sacramento quod accepistis: sed erratis et peritis.

[72] *Epist.* clxxxv, 23.

[73] *Contr. epist. Parmen.*, ii, 29. Cf. *Epist.* clxxxv, 23

[74] *Sermo ad Caesareensis eccl. plebem*, 2.

St. Augustine did not indulge in speculations properly so called about the nature of the baptismal character; it is only from comparisons he uses, that we may judge how he conceived it. By its very nature the character cannot be lost. It adheres to the baptized Christian, like the bodily sign with which soldiers and sheep are marked, and like the image stamped on coins;[75] for it is imprinted, (characterem a Domino dictum omnibus credentibus imprimendum), and engraved (characterem fixit) on the neophyte.[76]

The relations which the character creates between Christ and the baptized Christian are not fully exposed by St. Augustine. Since the character is called *character dominicus, regius, imperatoris nostri,* we may infer that it is looked upon as a mark of belonging to Christ, the chief Shepherd of the Christian flock and the chief Leader of the army of the faithful. This affirmation is in perfect agreement with the general tone of the Augustinian doctrine: the baptized Christian, who is outside the Church, is like the sheep leaving the fold, or the soldier deserting his colours.

St. Augustine does not ask himself whether the baptismal character is a physical or only a moral reality. At times he identifies it with a consecration:[77] this might incline us to think that he places it in the moral order. However, the objects with which he compared it so often:— namely, the mark imprinted on a sol-

[75] *Contr. epist. Parmen.*, ii, 29; *Contra Cresc.*, i, 35.

[76] *Sermo ad Caesareensis eccl. pleb.*, 2.

[77] *Epist.* xcviii, 5: Baptismi sacramentum . . . etiam apud haereticos valet et sufficit ad consecrationem, quamvis ad vitae aeternae participationem non sufficiat; quae consecratio reum quidem facit haereticum extra Domini gregem habentem dominicum characterem, corrigendum tamen admonet sana doctrina, non iterum similiter consecrandum.

dier's body, and the figure stamped on coins of money, forbid us to give to the views of St. Augustine such an interpretation.

On the contrary, the character of Ordination seems to be something moral. St. Augustine not only considers it a consecration,[78] he calls it often "the right of giving Baptism."[79] This is the right of administering validly the Sacraments: a right which is conferred by Ordination and cannot be lost. It is the fact of being constituted for ever the representative of the Church, of being commissioned to act in the name of Christ, and of being invested, for life, with a power that comes from Him: so that, when he administers the Sacraments, the minister's action is, everywhere and in all circumstances, the action of Christ Himself.[80] The priestly character is a kind of Divine proxy, by which the Savior gives irrevocably to a man the power to act in His name; hence it would be a reality of the moral order. However, St. Augustine compared it also to the military mark: the heretical minister, he insinuates now and then, preserves his character, just as the deserter preserves the "character imperatoris."[81] The priestly character would be, then, a physical reality.

We need not attempt to impart to the views of St. Augustine a preciseness which he himself did not impart to them. We may rather observe that, according to the holy Doctor, the doctrine of the character of Ordination, like that of the baptismal character, is a most accurate interpretation of the ecclesiastical

[78] *Contr. epist. Parm.*, ii, 28. Cf. *De bapt. cont. Donat.*, i, 2.
[79] *Ibid.* Cf. *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 2.
[80] *In Joan.* v, tract. 15, 18. Cf. *Contra litt. Petil.*, v. 65–67.
[81] *Sermo ad Caesar. eccl. pleb.*, 2. *Epist.* clxxxv, 23.

practice of repeating neither Baptism nor Ordination.

The Donatists wished to reordain the bishops consecrated by notoriously unworthy ministers, just as they rebaptized those whom they themselves had not baptized. St. Augustine draws their attention to the fact that, in this, they set themselves in opposition to the traditional custom. It has always been held, he says, that bishops, ordained by heretics or schismatics, that come back to the Catholic Church, are not reordained. These repentant bishops are not always called to exercise in the Church the functions of their order; but in case it is thought advisable to have recourse to their ministry, they are not again ordained. Ordination, like Baptism, remains then in them with all its fulness; this is why neither the one nor the other is to be repeated: when the deserter comes back to the camp, is his indelible "*character*" repeated? Consequently, the heretical minister may confer the Sacraments validly, if not lawfully.[82]

Hence the Augustinian doctrine of the sacramental character is always proposed as an explanation of the traditional practice of the Church. Thus it is bound up with a whole past. Contrary to what Harnack claims, it is not an artificial theory, framed for the sake of expediency; it is rather a living development of the sacramental principles laid down by the practice of the early Church, a development quite homogeneous with its starting point.

However, St. Augustine's teaching still contains some obscurities. Instead of always considering the character as an effect of the sacrament, he at times calls character the sacramental rite itself. For as the

[82] *Contra epist., Parmen.*, ii, 28, 29; *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, i, 2.

word "character" is used in the passive sense to designate the impress, the mark of the seal, and in the active sense to designate the instrument used to imprint the mark, the holy Doctor calls character, sometimes the effect of the sacrament on the one who is baptized or ordained, sometimes too the sacrament itself. The passages of his writings, in which St. Augustine has in view the indelible mark left by Baptism and Ordination, have already been quoted. Here are other texts where the term "character" is applied to the sacramental rite.

The character with which Christ's soldiers are marked is the invocation of the Trinity, that accompanies the baptismal ablution:

"De illo charactere militibus suis vel potius comitibus suis, ut hunc imprimerent eis quos congregabant castris ejus, praecepit dicens: *Ite, baptizate gentes in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*" [83]

This invocation is the character of our Leader, Jesus: it is the externally visible mark, which St. Paul recognized in the Corinthians divided among themselves, and which each one of us may recognize in his neighbor:

"Istum characterem a Domino dictum, omnibus credentibus imprimendum, quia noverat Paulus, expavescit ad eos qui volebant esse Pauli et dicit eis. . . . Agnoscite, advertite characterem vestrum; *numquid in nomine Pauli baptizati estis?*" [84]

[83] *Sermo ad Caesareensis eccl. plebem, 2.* Cf. *Enarr. in Psalm.*, xxxix, n. 1: Baptismus ille tanquam character infixus est.
[84] *Ibid.*

For me, says St. Augustine, when I receive my brother coming back from heresy or from schism, I behold his faith in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: for such is the effect of the character of my Leader.[85]

Hence St. Augustine does not always distinguish the character from the sacramental rite, as we distinguish the effect from its cause. His lack of precision comes from the fact that, as the character is a sign, it must be external in some way or other, so as to be recognized. The theologians of subsequent ages, like Alexander of Hales and St. Thomas, will declare by way of explanation, that the character is a spiritual sign and therefore cannot be known in itself: it is known by means of its cause, that is to say, by means of the sacramental rite which brings it about. These theological explanations are, so to speak, a prolongation of the views of St. Augustine which they illustrate and complete and also transcend.

The Bishop of Hippo did not further at all the growth of doctrine as regards the character of Confirmation. When he speaks of this sacrament, he is content to designate it, as St. Cyprian does, by the term *signaculum*,[86] without ever using the word character. The Donatist controversies bore exclusively on Baptism and Ordination, Confirmation remained in the back-ground, and the development pertaining to its sacramental character took place later, that is to

[85] *Ibid.:* Ego quando venio ad fratrem meum, et colligo errantem fratrem meum, attendo fidem in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Iste est character imperatoris mei.

[86] *Contra litter. Petil.,* ii, 39: In hoc unguento sacramentum Chrismatis vultis interpretari: quod quidem in genere visibilium signaculorum sacrosanctum est, sicut et ipse baptismus.

say, during the Middle Ages: then we find Alexander of Hales affirming that *secundum communem Doctorum viam* Confirmation imprints a character in the soul.[87]

§ IV. *The Silence of the Early Middle Ages concerning the Sacramental Character.— The complete development of the Dogma at the beginning of the 13th. Century.*

Although it was still lacking somewhat in precision, the Augustinian doctrine condemned most explicitly the renewal of Baptism and Ordination. The historian is surprised to see how insignificant a place this doctrine holds in the life of the Church from the 7th. to the 12th. century: this may lead us to observe that, as long as a doctrine has not been sanctioned by infallible ecclesiastical authority, it runs the risk of being forgotten or ignored. In the early Middle Ages, Baptism conferred by heretical or unworthy ministers, was considered valid, when it had been rightly administered; such was not the case with the other Sacraments, especially with that of Order.

"In the rivalry between the British and the Anglo-Saxon churches during the 7th. century; in the struggles of the Popes against the Roman aristocracy or against the Emperors, during the 8th. and 9th. centuries; in the struggle of the Popes against Photius; in the struggle of the Church against simoniacs and intruders, until the 12th. century, the chief instrument of warfare, sometimes of the enemies of the Church, sometimes too, nay most often of the best sons of the Church and of several Popes, was simply to declare void and to repeat ordinations that were certainly

[87] *Sum. Theolog.*, iv, qu. 9, membr. 5, art. 7, sect. 2.

valid." [88] These reordinations are quite different from those which, according to the testimony of history, occurred during the first five centuries: the latter can be accounted for, since heretics were denied the right of ordaining validly. In the early Middle Ages, ordinations that had been made by Catholics were at times repeated. In some provinces, reordination was, as it were, a means of government, by which the authorities promoted the respect and observance of the disciplinary laws of the Church.

The principles according to which the value of ordinations was judged, differed from those of St. Augustine. Instead of declaring that ordinations are not to be repeated, since they are valid in spite of the unworthiness of him who confers them, and since their character is indelible, men of that age appealed to far other considerations.

In the synod of Lateran, held in 769 by Stephen III, to deliberate over the usurpation of the Papal See by his predecessor Constantine, it was decided that all the ordinations made by the usurper were null, and that all the Sacraments he had administered, except Baptism and Confirmation, had to be repeated. The ordination of Constantine himself was deemed void, because, contrary to the ecclesiastical canons, being only a layman, he had been elected Pope by the people, and because he had received all the Orders, including the episcopate, without observing the interstices.[89]

[88] L. Saltet, *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique,* 1901, pp. 229–230. Morin, *De sacris Eccl. ordinat.,* p. III, exerc. v, capp. 1–7; *Monumenta germ., Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum.* Hanover, 1890–1897, t. i–iii. Cf. also L. Saltet, *Les Réordinations,* Paris, 1907.

[89] Hefele, *History of the Councils,* vol. V, pp. 337–338.

Morin remarks judiciously,

"Signatum est in nobis lumen vultus tui, Domine; dedisti certissimum est validam esse Constantini ordinationem, et consequenter valide alios ordinasse, licet illicite fuerit ordinatus." [90]

The motives alleged, towards the end of the 9th. century, either to defend or to deny the validity of the ordinations made by Pope Formosus, were also altogether foreign to the doctrine of the character. The defenders of the validity recalled, without mentioning the character at all, the traditional practice of not repeating the sacrament of Order; those who upheld the nullity, claimed that Formosus had been guilty of violating the laws of the Church, and thus had forfeited the episcopal prerogatives.[91]

During these times, ignorance, and still more the violence of passions, hindered the understanding of things. A historian of the 11th. century, Sigebert, speaking of the dialogue *Infensor et Defensor,* which a contemporary of Pope Formosus, Auxilius, had composed in reference to the controversy regarding ordinations, uses these terms which express the confusion of minds no less than the author's irony:

"Auxilius scripsit Dialogum sub persona Infensoris et Defensoris divinis et canonicis exemplis munitum contra intestinam discordiam Romanae Ecclesiae, scilicet de ordinationibus, exordinationibus et superordinationibus Romanorum Pontificum, et ordinatorum ab eis exordinationibus et superordinationibus." [92]

[90] MORIN, *op. cit.,* p. III, exercit. V, cap. v.

[91] MORIN, op. cit., Ibid., cap. iii; HEFELE, *Histoire des Conciles,* vol. VI, p. 52. [The English translation of Hefele's work does not go beyond the Second Council of Nicæa in 787]. MANY, *De Sacra Ordinatione,* p. 71.

[92] SIGEBERT, *De script. eccles.,* 112; *P.L.,* clx, 571.

A quite similar confusion manifests itself, during the 11th. and 12th. centuries, in connection with the ordinations made by schismatics. According to some, a simoniac Bishop cannot confer Orders validly, since he is under the ban of ecclesiastical censures: hence the ordinations he makes are to be repeated.[93] According to others, the ordinations performed by simoniacs are valid and must not be repeated, for, as St. Peter Damian declares, God is the true minister of Ordination, Christ "truly consecrates" the candidate for Ordination, whilst the Bishop is performing the rite over him: hence the minister's unworthiness does not matter.[94] The reordinations of those that had been ordained by simoniacs, and the controversies to which these reordinations gave rise, ceased altogether only at the end of the 12th. century.

These instances of repeated ordinations, which history records in such great numbers and for several centuries, apparently oppose the doctrine of the sacramental character. The priestly character is incompatible with the repetition of the sacrament of Order; it was by the existence of this character that St. Augustine accounted for the traditional practice of not reordaining the bishops ordained in an heretical or schismatical sect. But then, was the practice of the Church during the early part of the Middle Ages in opposition to dogma?

The serious nature of the problem has not failed to attract the attention of Catholic theologians and historians. After exposing the cases of reordinations with a truly remarkable fair-mindedness, John Morin

[93] Cf. St. Peter Damian, Opusc. V, *Actus Mediolanensis; P.L.*, cxlv; Morin, cap. ii; Many, *op. cit., ibid.*

[94] Opusc. VI, *Gratissimus, 2.*

declares they cannot be accounted for, unless we acknowledge in the Church the power to determine the conditions in which ordinations are valid, just as she can establish diriment impediments of Marriage, and take away from a priest, by withdrawing his jurisdiction, the power to absolve validly.

"Ecclesia enim, meo judicio, definire potest quibus conditionibus ordinans episcopus auctoritate sua uti debeat; quibusve cum donis et qualibus ordinandus sese ordinanti sistere ut valide et efficaciter ordinem ab eo recipiat: ita ut si ordinans aut ordinandus definitionem hanc neglexerint, contraque egerint, actio sit nulla et irrita, atque ut effectus producatur, iteranda. Idem de hoc sacramento analogice dicendum quod de Matrimonio et Paenitentia." [95]

This concession being made, all the facts are easily explained, since as we know from the documents, the ordinations that were repeated during the early Middle Ages had been conferred contrary to the ecclesiastical Canons. As the conditions established by the laws of the Church had not been complied with, these ordinations were null and they had necessarily to be repeated.[96]

But it is rather difficult to make the concession claimed by the celebrated Oratorian. For, whilst the Church can determine the conditions on which the marriage contract shall be valid, and by granting or refusing the jurisdiction, control the valid administration of sacramental absolution, this is not the case with

[95] *Op. cit.*, cap. 9, n. 1.

[96] *Ibid.*, n. 2: Hoc dato quod mihi videtur maxime aequum . . . nulla difficultas superest in ordinationibus iteratis eorum quos ordinaverant pontifices Constantinus, Formosus, Photius, Ebbo et alii. Nam qui iterum ordinabant, aut ordinandos contendebant, judicabant eos secundum canones non fuisse ordinatos.

Ordination. The validity of the latter depends exclusively on the exercise of the episcopal power: when the Bishop performs all the ceremonies of Ordination, with the intention to do what the Church does, he confers Orders validly in spite of all prohibitions. Did not Catholics look upon as validly ordained the Constitutional bishops who had received their episcopal consecration from the apostate Talleyrand, on January 25, 1791?

The solution of the problem is apparently to be sought in the fact that sacramentary theology was still lacking in precision and that the doctrine of the character had been forgotten. In the early part of the Middle Ages, theologians judged of the validity of ordinations, as is rightly observed by Morin, from the observance of the laws of the Church, because they were still reluctant to admit that an unworthy minister may confer validly the Sacraments, and because the doctrine of the character had not as yet become fully explicit. But when the dogma of efficacy and that of the character were completely developed, then all the dissensions concerning the validity of simoniac ordinations came to an end. Then minds realized clearly that if the ordination conferred by an unworthy minister is valid and produces an indelible character, it cannot be repeated. This result had been definitively acquired in the first half of the 13th. century.[97]

* * *

At that time, as a matter of fact, the full develop-

[97] The theologians of the 12th. century, especially P. Lombard and Gratian, failed to give a solution to the controversy about simoniacal ordinations, because they did not grasp the doctrine of the character.

ment of the doctrine of the sacramental character had already taken place. Pope Innocent III (†1216) sets forth a well defined teaching about the baptismal character; his second successor, Gregory IX (†1241) mentions the character of Ordination, and Alexander of Hales (†1245) reduces to a system the traditional doctrine of the three characters, and thus paves the way for the work of St. Thomas.[98]

It was the development of the dogma of sacramental efficacy that helped to bring out in its full light, at the beginning of the 13th. century, the doctrine of the three characters. In keeping with Peter Lombard's teaching, theologians distinguished three parts in a sacrament: the external rite, *sacramentum* or *signum tantum;* grace, *res tantum;* something intermediary between the external rite and grace, *sacramentum et res,* which the upholders of dispositive causality called the *ornatus animae.* This ornament of the soul, produced by Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, is nothing else than the character.

In fact, this is precisely the manner in which Alexander of Hales sets forth the theology of the character:

"Dicimus quod in baptismo tria sunt: unum signum tantum, scilicet lotio exterior; aliud signatum tantum, scilicet gratia; aliud quod est signum et signatum, scilicet character; signatum quidem respectu lotionis exterioris, signum vero respectu gratiae." [99]

The character, as well as the ornament of the soul,

[98] The doctrine of the character is to be found also in the *Summa,* lib. IV, cap. 2, *de Bapt.,* of William of Auxerre († 1230) and in the treatise *De sacr. bapt.,* 3, of William of Paris († 1249).

[99] *Summa theolog.,* IV, qu. 8, membr. 8, art. 1.

is a sign of grace; it demands grace and places it infallibly in the soul, when the latter does not impede in any way that action:

"Character est signum gratiae: signum dico demonstrativum, quia quantum est de se ponit gratiam in recipienti: quod autem aliquam non ponat, hoc non est ex parte characteris, sed ex parte suscipientis, qui . . . ponit obicem gratiae." [1]

By adorning the soul, all the Sacraments mark it with a special sign, distinct from grace:

"Omnia sacramenta . . . ornant ipsam animam, et ornando aliquo modo signant." [2]

What constitutes a difference between the character and the ornament, is that the latter is not indelible. We need often the Sacraments that merely adorn the soul; therefore, in order that they may be renewed, they impress on the soul a transitory sign. This is not the case with the Sacraments that impress the character; their effect can be produced only once. Thus, in order that they may not be received a second time, they mark the soul with an indelible sign:

"Semel fit deletio originalis peccati, semel datur cingulum militiae spiritualis, sicut in corporali apparet, semel datur potestas ministrandi spiritualiter . . . et ideo in his [in baptismo, confirmatione et ordine] datur quaedam impressio perpetua, quam characterem nominamus, ut ulterius sacramento hujusmodi per iterationem non sit injuria." [3]

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Qu. 5, membr. 4, art. 1.
[3] *Ibid.*

To demonstrate the existence of the three characters, Alexander of Hales appeals to the common teaching of theologians, to the authority of Dionysius the Areopagite,[4] and to reasons of fitness deduced both from the comparisons used by the Fathers when speaking of the character, and from the prerogatives of Christ, Lord, King, and Priest, to which correspond the three characters, by which man becomes the disciple, the soldier and the minister of Jesus.

At the time the English Franciscan wrote, the doctrine of the sacramental character was universally taught, as is inferred from the full theology he exposes of it, and from the use Innocent III and Gregory IX had already made of it.

Like Alexander of Hales, Pope Innocent III sets forth his teaching about the baptismal character, by means of the distinction between the *sacramentum,* the *res,* and the *character.*

The Archbishop of Arles had asked him whether the character was imprinted in those who received Baptism in a state of sleep or of insanity, and in those who were baptized against their will. Those who are baptized when they are asleep or insane, do not receive the baptismal character, unless they previously manifested the desire to be baptized:

"Si prius catechumeni exstitissent et habuissent propositum baptizandi . . . tunc ergo characterem sacramentalis imprimit operatio, cum obicem voluntatis contrariae non invenit obsistentem."

As regards those on whom Baptism is imposed by

[4] *De Eccles. Hierarch.,* cap. 2. Cf. St. Thomas, 3 p., qu. 63, art. 2.

force, if they are completely deprived of their freedom, they receive neither the grace nor the character of Baptism; the sacrament is void, because of their contrary intention.

"Ille vero qui nunquam consentit, sed penitus contradicit, nec rem nec characterem suscipit sacramenti."

If they go spontaneously to Baptism, for fear of threats or chastisements, they are free enough that the sacrament should be valid, and the character produced:

"Is qui terroribus atque suppliciis violenter attrahitur, et ne detrimentum incurrat, baptismi suscipit sacramentum, talis (sicut et is qui ficte ad baptismum accedit) characterem suscipit christianitatis impressum." [5]

The policy of vexation carried on at the outset of the 13th. century against the unbelievers of Southern France, explains these receptions of Baptism, caused by fear. Hence arose practical difficulties, which the Pope was asked to solve: and the solution he gave depends altogether on the doctrine of the character: a conclusive proof that this doctrine was then known and accepted by all, in Arles as well as in Rome. Hence how can its origin be ascribed to Innocent III?

It is also by resting on the doctrine of the character that Gregory IX answers the consultation of the Archbishop of Barium in Apulia: the ordinations, made unlawfully outside the epochs determined by the Church, are valid and confer the character: the members of

[5] *Decretal.*, lib. III, tit. 42, cap. iii, *Majores. Corpus juris can.*, t. ii, p. 621, ed. RICHTER. Cf. DENZ., *Enchirid.*, n. 342 (new ed., n. 411).

the clergy thus ordained shall be submitted to penance and then fulfil the functions of their Orders.[6]

The important place which the theology of the character occupies in the minds of Christians at the beginning of the 13th. century warns us not to overestimate the bearing of the silence we have noticed during the early part of the Middle Ages. This silence shows that the doctrine of the character was forgotten for a while, in the midst of the violent strifes which raged in the Church from the 7th. to the 12th. century. As soon as calm was restored, the doctrine appeared again, this time never to be obscured.

This is what the theologians subsequent to the 13th. century realized but imperfectly. As they did not find the doctrine of the character in the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, which all of them commented upon, and moreover as they were not familiar enough with historical studies to be able to find it in the works of St. Augustine and of the Greek Fathers, they did hold it; but at the same time they would observe that the doctrine was recent in the Church, and in proof of their remark, they would appeal to the famous decretal of Pope Innocent III. Duns Scotus finds for establishing it, no other argument than the authority of the Church.[7] Durandus of St. Pourçain writes that it is founded only on the testimony of the theologians

[6] *Decretal.*, lib. I, tit. XI, cap. XVI. *Ibid.*, t. II, p. 119; Consultationi tuae taliter respondemus, quod eos qui extra tempora statuta sacros ordines receperunt, characterem non est dubium recepisse: quos pro transgressione hujusmodi primo eis paenitentia imposita competenti sustinere poteris in susceptis ordinibus ministrare.

[7] *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 6, qu. 9, n. 14: Propter ergo solam auctoritatem Ecclesiae, quantum occurrit ad praesens, est ponendum characterem imprimi.

of his time.[8] At the beginning of the 16th. century, Cardinal Cajetan still declared that the teaching of the Church about the sacramental character was not ancient:

"Sacramenta imprimere characterem ex S. Scriptura non habetur, sed ab Ecclesiae auctoritate et non multum antiqua."[9]

Nay, in the Council of Trent, some theologians wished that the Council should declare solidly probable the doctrine of the character, without making it an article of faith.[10]

Decidedly, in order to be a good theologian, one has to be somewhat of an historian! We are not much disturbed by the mistake of the authors just mentioned, now that a more attentive study of documents, based on the doctrine of the development of dogma, enables us to establish rather easily the thesis on which we are engaged.

§ V. *The Nature of the Sacramental Character.— Alexander of Halcs and St. Thomas.— Duns Scotus and Durandus of St. Pourçain.*

When, in the 13th. century, the doctrine of the three characters was fully developed, theologians attempted to define what the sacramental character was in itself.

[8] *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 4, qu. 1: Omnes moderni profitentur imprimi characterem in aliquibus sacramentis, et nos loquentes ut plures dicamus cum eis characterem non nihil esse.

[9] *In* 3am *part.*, qu. 63, art. 1.

[10] A. Theiner, *Acta concilii Tridentini*, t. i, pp. 394, 397, 402, 403. Protestants have exaggerated the bearing of these hesitations in the writers of the 14th. and 15th. centuries. Cf. Pallavicini, *Hist. du conc. de Tr.*, l. IX, chap. v.

To what category of being should it be ascribed, and what are the exact relations which it establishes between Christ and the faithful? These two questions theologians had to answer so as to be able to get some idea of the notion of the character.

* * *

Alexander of Hales taught that the character was an ontological reality, adhering intrinsically to the soul, and not a mere logical relation. He thus inaugurated the teaching from which Durandus of St. Pourçain alone was to depart. This reality is a *habitus,* that is to say, a quality which perfects the soul intrinsically and fits it to receive grace. The baptismal character is not intended for any special act, it is not conferred to man precisely in view of the acts of public worship. Its purpose is to mark for ever those who belong to the flock of Christ and to dispose them for the reception of grace:

"Character est aliquis habitus relucens, in anima impressus perpetuo, quo discernatur fuisse sanctificatio baptismi. Nec est habitus ad agendum simpliciter, sed est ad disponendum ad gratiam quantum est in se dum homo est viator, et ad discernendum ovem dominicam a lupis." [11]

This view of the character, which is in dependence on the system of dispositive causality, was adopted by St. Bonaventure,[12] and later, with important modifications, by Suarez,[13] and Bellarmine.[14]

[11] *Sum. theol.,* IV, qu. 8, membr. 8, art. 1. The seat of the character is the intellect.

[12] *In IV Sent.,* Dist. 6, art. 1, qu. 1 et 2.

[13] *In* 3am *part.,* qu. 63, art. 4, disp. 11, sect. 3.

[14] *De Sacram. in gen.,* lib. II, cap. 19.

As for the relations established by the character between Christ and the faithful, Alexander says without much precision that they consist in the assimilation of the soul to Jesus Christ. The character is a mark of Christ's property, which renders the faithful similar to Him: the baptismal character makes one similar to Christ, the Leader of His Church; that of Confirmation, to Christ, King of the sacred hosts; and that of Order, to Jesus, Sovereign Priest.[15]

*
* *

The best known of all systems, however, is that of St. Thomas.[16] The Angelic Doctor grants to Alexander that the character belongs to the category of quality; but he refuses to admit that it belongs to that kind of quality, which is called *habitus.* The kind of quality to which the character is to be assigned, is *potentia;* for, according to St. Thomas, the essential end of the character is not to fit the soul for grace, but to make man capable of performing the acts of Divine worship. The Sacraments were instituted, not only to heal man of sin, but also to consecrate him to the worship, as established in the Christian religion. This consecration is effected by the character, which is both the badge of sacred functions and the power to accomplish them.

Now, Christian worship consists principally in the celebration of the Sacraments. This celebration requires ministers that are capable of performing lawfully the sacramental action, and faithful that are also capable of participating in them effectively. Hence the character is a power: that of accomplishing the

[15] *Sum. theol.,* IV, qu. 8, membr. 8, art. 1.
[16] *Sum. theol.,* 3 p., qu. 63, art. 1–6.

acts of Christian worship or of participating in them.

Attractive as this systematic exposition may be, yet it does not escape being arbitrary, for the administration of Baptism does not require in the minister the priestly character, since any person may validly baptize. Besides, the character of Confirmation is not accounted for, inasmuch as it grants no active or passive power regarding the other Sacraments: according to St. Thomas himself, it imparts only the power to confess *ex officio* the faith of Jesus Christ.[17]

Moreover how conceive the exercise of that physical power which man possesses, we are told, through his character? For instance, when the priest consecrates the Eucharist, all that he does, is simply to pronounce the words of consecration. We can easily understand that, as he is officially commissioned, because of his character, for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, God, at his words, produces transubstantiation; but we can hardly see in this act the exercise of a power effecting physically the Eucharistic change. True, St. Thomas observes that this power is ministerial, instrumental; that the minister performs the function of an instrument in the hands of God, and that the exercise of this physical power must be understood just as the instrumental causality of the Sacraments. Yet, this explanation is far from removing the difficulties.

This is why most authors do not look upon the sacramental character as a power. Some hold it to be a *habitus,*[18] others[19] whose opinion seems now to pre-

[17] Qu. 72, art. 5.

[18] Suarez and Bellarmine among others.

[19] Franzelin, *De Sacr. in gen.,* th. xiii; Chr. Pesch, *Praelectiones dogm.,* tom. VI, n. 189 sq.: Character sacramentalis

vail, a mere supernatural quality, which adheres to the soul and places it in special relations to Christ, to the functions of Christian worship and to grace. The character is Christ's likeness impressed on the soul, by which man is officially appointed to the functions of worship, and requires a special right to receive grace.

*
* *

If the system of St. Thomas seems rather weak as regards the determination of the category of being to which the character belongs, it is better grounded, on the other hand, in its exposition of the relations which the character establishes between Christ and the faithful.

Since the sacramental character is intended to make man capable of administering or of receiving the Sacraments, it is an effective participation in the priesthood of Jesus Christ. For the sacramental power is a priestly power, which can flow only from the priesthood of Christ, the High Priest of the whole creation. Hence, by the character, the faithful are clad with a priesthood like that of Jesus; and, as this derived priesthood is necessarily after the image of the chief priesthood, it follows that, by the character, the Christian acquires a likeness to Christ, Sovereign Priest.

The character affects the soul intrinsically. The latter is, as it were, fashioned, "conformed" by the former to the resemblance of Jesus, High Priest, as a coin is marked with the legal stamp. Thus the cha-

est supernaturalis qualitas animae, qua homo speciali modo Christo sacerdoti conformatur et ad divinum cultum deputatur simulque specialem relationem ad gratiam accipit. Billot, *De Eccl. sacr.*, I, pp. 138 sq., adopts the doctrine of St. Thomas: Character . . . est quaedam potentia ministerialis.

racter is, as it were, a reflection in the soul of the priestly countenance of Christ. All Christians share in the priesthood of Jesus: but the ordinary faithful share in it so as to be able to receive the Sacraments: priests alone share in it actively. It goes without saying that "as a necessary consequence, the Divine goodness grants to those who are invested with the character the graces they need for the worthy exercise of their functions." [20]

This conception of the character is indeed quite lofty. Piety feels a thrill of joy and of wonder, at the thought that our souls bear the physical likeness of Christ, Sovereign Priest. Grace makes us partakers of the Divine nature, and gives us a resemblance of nature with the Word Incarnate; the character consecrates us to the service of God, and renders us similar to Jesus, High Priest, by making us sharers of His Priesthood. All the theologians that came after the Angelic Doctor readily accepted this doctrine, which is quite in harmony with the traditional teaching that the character renders us like unto God and consecrates us to His service.

* * *

During the whole 13th. century, theologians look upon the character as an ontological reality, clinging to the soul. In the 14th. century, a different teaching arises, which, later on, will not cease to appeal to many: the teaching of the Dominican Friar, Durandus of St. Pourçain, the *Doctor resolutissimus* (†1333).

[20] Art. 4, ad 1um. Saint Thomas after Alexander of Hales places the character in the intellect.

The theory of Durandus had been proposed, during the 13th. century, by a school which rivalled that of St. Thomas, and made the character consist in a real relation. According to Duns Scotus, there is no reason why the character should not be a mere relation, extrinsically created by God, on account of the sacrament, between the soul, on one hand, and the family of Christ, His spiritual army, and the college of His ministers on the other:

"Potest dici characterem esse tantummodo quemdam respectum extrinsecus advenientem ipsi animae, causatum a Deo immediate in susceptione sacramenti initerabilis; quia sic ponendo saltem omnes conditiones salvantur, quae communiter attribuuntur characteri." [21]

This is the doctrine Durandus will uphold.

But Scotus is not content with this doctrine which describes the character as a mere logical relation. The character is a real relation,[22] which must have for its basis an ontological reality, just as fatherhood is a real relation, which has generation for its basis. What is this reality? In his answer Scotus is not self-consistent: it is either "the soul wholly naked," that is to say, without any additional supernatural quality,[23]— a view which had been opposed by St. Thomas;[24] or the soul modified by the sacrament.[25] But then, this modification is the character itself, rather than its foundation. At any rate the opinion

[21] *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 6, qu. 10, n. 9. Cf. n. 12.

[22] Vasquez, *In* 3am *p.*, qu. 63, disp. 134, cap. 2, and some others wrongly identify the idea of Duns Scotus with that of Durandus.

[23] *Ibid.*, n. 11.

[24] Qu. 63, art. 6, ad 3am.

[25] Scotus, *Ibid.*, n. 13.

of Duns Scotus has for us no other interest than that of exhibiting the tendency with which the altogether Nominalistic view of Durandus is connected.[26] The latter refuses to see in the character an ontological reality, adhering to the soul. He makes it consist in a mere relation of reason (relatio rationis), wholly extrinsic to the soul, established forever, in virtue of the Divine institution, by the sacrament, between man and the functions of worship, to which he is appointed.

As an ideal relation is created by human convention between a piece of money and a determined value, and between a counter and any meaning whatever, so is a like relation established by Divine institution between man and the sacred ministry:

"Character non est aliqua natura absoluta, sed est sola relatio rationis, per quam ex institutione vel pactione divina deputatur aliquis ad sacras actiones. Quod declaratur sic, sicut nummus sortitur rationem pretii et merellus rationem signi ex humana institutione, sic res naturales sortiuntur rationem sacramenti et homo rationem ministri ex divina institutione, sed nummus efficitur pretium et merellus signum per solam relationem rationis humanae sic instituentis, ergo res sacramentales sortiuntur rationem sacramenti et homo rationem ministri per solam rationem relationis divinae sic instituentis. Cum igitur character sit id quo homo efficitur minister sacramentorum, vel susceptivus eorum, patet quod character non sit nisi relatio rationis ex ordinatione vel pactione divina." [27]

To the character corresponds, in the civil order, the appointment for life, of a personage to some public trust. This appointment modifies in no way the soul of him who receives it; it establishes simply a moral

[26] *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 4, qu. 1.
[27] DURANDUS, *Ibid.*

relation between him and the employment with which he is entrusted. So also, the baptismal character, whilst modifying, not even in the least degree, the soul of the neophyte, establishes between him and the Church of Jesus Christ, an indissoluble moral bond, by which he becomes a member of the Christian family and is made capable of receiving the Sacraments. A similar bond is created by Confirmation between him who is confirmed and the army of Christ, in which he is irrevocably enrolled. By Ordination, man becomes forever the minister of the priestly functions, and the representative of Christ in the administration of the Sacraments.

Were Catholic dogma a merely human teaching, this simple conception, which removes skilfully all the difficulties of the rational order, would not have failed to score a great success. However, in spite of this feature so attractive to the mind, it has always been held in suspicion by theologians, as being opposed to tradition, and it has never been viewed with favor by the Church. The *Decretum ad Armenos*[28] shows a decided preference for the contrary view, and declares that Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders "impress in the soul" a character, that is to say, a spiritual and indelible sign, which forbids the repetition of these Sacraments. If the character is a spiritual sign impressed in the soul, it is then a reality intrinsic to the soul, and not merely a fictitious and ideal being.

Yet, it is chiefly since the Council of Trent that the

[28] Denzing., *Enchirid.*, n. 590 (new ed., n. 695): Inter haec sacramenta tria sunt: baptismus, confirmatio et ordo, quae characterem, id est, spirituale quoddam signum a caeteris distinctum, imprimunt in anima indelebile. Unde in eadem persona non reiterantur.

system of Durandus has fallen into discredit. The decree which defines the doctrine of the character is formulated in the same terms as the *Decretum ad Armenos:* the character is "impressed in the soul." Hence the authors subsequent to the 16th. century criticize quite severely the teaching of Durandus: some have even gone so far as to declare it heretical.[29] In reality, the Council of Trent did not concern itself with the teaching of Durandus, for the purpose of the Fathers was to define, not the nature of the character, but its existence which was denied by the Reformers. This is expressly remarked by Pallavicini,[30] and proved also by the acts of the Council.[31] The Church, then, has never decided on the value of the conception of this character proposed by Durandus, and a certain reserve is incumbent on the theologian who judges this theory, as was well realized by Vasquez.[32]

Thus we explain why the Cartesian theologians of the 17th. and 18th. centuries [33] showed their liking for it; they found in that view of the sacramental character a doctrine which was not condemned by the Church, and which could be reconciled more easily than that of St. Thomas with the psychology of Descartes.

It is well for us not to condemn what the Church has not condemned. Both the love of truth and concern for exactness demand such reserve. On the

[29] Among others, SUAREZ, *In* 3am *part.,* qu. 63, art. 4, disp. 11, sect. 2.

[30] *Hist du concile de Trente,* liv. IX, chap. v, n. 2.

[31] A. THEINER, *op. cit.,* I, p. 398.

[32] *In* 3am *part.,* disput. 134, cap. 2, n. 27: Hae rationes, me quidem judice, non probant opinionem Durandi . . . damnatam esse, ut recentiores theologi contendunt.

[33] Cf. FRANZELIN, *De Sacr. in gen.,* th. XIII.

other hand, prudence advises us, in questions as delicate as dogmatic questions, in which the part of authority is absolutely preponderant, to side with the majority and to embrace the view which, according to authoritative voices, is in keeping with Tradition. If we follow the advice of prudence, we can hardly abstain from preferring the doctrine of St. Thomas to that of Durandus of St. Pourçain.

CHAPTER V

THE NUMBER OF THE SACRAMENTS

We have so far examined the internal constitution of a sacrament: its elements, matter and form, its efficacy *ex opere operato* and its effects. We have now to take up the other aspects of the Sacraments: to determine their number, to prove their Divine institution and to show the intention necessary in minister and in recipient, that they may be validly conferred and received.

§ I. *The Teaching of the Church.*

The number of the Sacraments was defined against the Protestants by the Council of Trent:

"Si quis dixerit sacramenta novae legis . . . esse plura vel pauciora quam septem, videlicet Baptismum, Confirmationem, Eucharistiam, Paenitentiam, Extremam Unctionem, Ordinem et Matrimonium, aut etiam aliquod horum septem non esse vere et proprie sacramentum; anathema sit." [1]

Here we have the dogma of the septenary number of the Sacraments: there are seven Sacraments in the New Law, neither more nor less. The Reformers of the 16th. century all agreed in rejecting this

[1] *Sess. VII, De sacram. in gen.*, can. I.

teaching of the Church, some acknowledging three Sacraments, others two, and others four.[2]

Those rites which they refused to admit as Sacraments they styled "Sacraments improperly so called," or rather "sacramentals," like prayer and almsgiving. These, they remarked, are sometimes, though improperly, termed "Sacraments."[3] Against these errors, the Council defined that not only Baptism and the Eucharist, but all the rites which it enumerates are Sacraments properly so called; all were instituted by Christ, all produce grace *ex opere operato*. They are on quite a different plane, then, from such rites as prayers and almsgiving which cannot be strictly called "Sacraments."[4]

The definition of what a sacrament is had to be laid down before the number of Sacraments could be determined. For that definition being the unit of the septenary number of the Sacraments, so long as it did not exist, the number could not be given. It had also to be made clear that each of our seven sacramental rites was an efficacious symbol of grace; otherwise it could not have been numbered among the Sacraments. Now, from the beginning the Church has always lived her Sacraments and has always had faith in their marvellous efficacy, as we have seen in our third chapter; but she did not from the beginning consider them systematically, ranging them under the concept of efficacious symbols of grace. This was a work of synthesis accomplished only by later theological speculation.

[2] Cf. below, pp. 287 and ff.

[3] CALVIN, *Instit. chrét.*, iv, 19.

[4] Cf. PALLAVICINI, *Hist. du concile de Trente*, liv. 9, chap. IV, n. 5.— A. THEINER, *Acta concilii Trid.*, t. i, p. 383.

This double task — namely of working out the definition and of applying the concept of an efficacious symbol of grace to each of our seven Sacraments — went on rather slowly.[5]

Taking this into account we should naturally expect that the determination of the number of the Sacraments would be of a rather recent date. Such is the case. History does not give us a definite list of the Sacraments until the 12th. century.[6] Ecclesiastical writers of the Patristic period, not having a definition of a sacrament, did not even think of counting them. During the early Middle Ages there were some attempts to count the Sacraments; but the lists then made were defective, owing to the fact that the definition was vague and lacking scientific precision.

At first sight these facts may cause some surprise, but the preceding considerations show how they can be accounted for. Moreover — a point of capital importance — from the fact that the Church did not have

[5] Cum jam per se sit quaestio difficilis et usque ad nostra tempora disputationibus obnoxia, quae sit definitio maxime apta sacramentorum, ita multo difficilius erat ex ingenti multitudine earum rerum, quae aetate Patrum sacramenta vocabantur, eligere clare et distincte proprietates communes sacramentorum presse dictorum. Sufficiebat igitur Patribus suo loco explicare hoc vel illud signum esse sacrum et ex institutione Christi gratiae collativum. Cum progressu vero temporum et vox sacramenti restricta et, necessitate postulante, tractatus de sacramentis in genere institutus est. Eo ipso, quod communis notio omnium sacramentorum in genere definiebatur, conumeratio sacramentorum sua quasi sponte sequebatur. CHR. PESCH, *Prael. dogm.*, vol. vi, n. 90.

[6] TANQUEREY, *Synopsis Theol. dogm.* (1903), t. ii, p. 161: Ante saec. XII, nullus invenitur qui directe et explicite docuerit septem et septem tantum esse sacramenta.— CHR. PESCH, *Ibid.*, n. 87: Quod S.S. Patres nunquam diserte de septenario numero sacramentorum loquuntur, neque mirum est neque contra veritatem propositionis praecedentis [quod sunt septem sacr.] probat.

an explicit knowledge of the number of her Sacraments from the beginning, it does not follow she did not know them. As we have seen many times, the Church made use of her Sacraments long before she wrought out her sacramentary theology; she lived the dogma before she formulated it. Sacramental practice antedates by centuries the systematic elaboration of a sacramentary theology. This is to be expected, for the latter is but a scientific statement of the former: *lex orandi lex credendi.*

§ II. *The Number of the Sacraments in the Patristic Period.*

The inspired writings mention all the Sacraments more or less clearly and explicitly, without ever giving a list of them. Our Savior, of course, gave His Church all the sacramental realities, but He trusted to tradition and to theological thought to develop and to bring out in detail the different aspects of these Divine realities. The Church at once hastened to make use of these means of salvation placed at her disposal by Christ for the conversion and sanctification of men. But though she thus made use of them from the beginning, it was not until much later — we cannot insist too much on this point — that she thought of and found the time for making an inventory of them. This came only after a synthetic study[7] of the Sacraments had made it possible to take a survey of the whole

[7] Franzelin, *De Sacram. in gen.,* thes. XVIII: Facile patet, demonstrationem illam directam septenarii numeri sacramentorum non posse esse nisi synthesin ex tractatibus omnibus specialibus de sacramentis. Neque enim sive in Scripturis sive a Sanctis Patribus usque ad saeculum fere XII ea synthesis jam facta, et sacramenta omnia novae Legis sub uno numero comprehensa et plena tractatione velut sub uno conspectu posita reperiuntur.

subject, to ascertain their common features and to determine their number.

This work of synthesis, absolutely indispensable to the development of the septenary number, was not accomplished in the Patristic period. The Fathers spoke of all the Sacraments, indeed, but ever from a strictly practical point of view, to answer actual needs, such as the instructing of the faithful or catechumens or the refuting of heretics.

The Apostolic Fathers make frequent allusions to Baptism and to the Eucharist.[8] In the middle of the 2nd. century, St. Justin, in order to dissipate the widespread calumnies of the pagans about the Christian initiation, explains the baptismal and Eucharistic ceremonies of Christians to the Roman emperors, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius. At the beginning of the 3rd. century, Tertullian speaks, in different places, not only of Baptism and the Eucharist, but also of Confirmation and Penance. The penitential rite especially was brought out into relief in the whole Church by the Novatian crisis. In the baptismal controversy, both Eastern and Western writers discuss the conditions necessary for the validity of Baptism and Confirmation and even of the Eucharist and Ordination. All this shows that the Christians of that time were acquainted with the sacramental rites. They lived them, but they never thought of making a comparative study of them; consequently, though they had them all, they had not yet discerned their common traits nor determined their number.

Still, in the 4th. century, the needs of catechetical

[8] The texts of the Fathers alluded to in this chapter will be found in chapter III.

instruction prompted the Fathers to group together the three Sacraments of the Christian initiation. This was the beginning of a list of the Sacraments. The custom was, in those days, to advance the catechumens only gradually in Christian Doctrine; teaching little at first, then more and more as they approached the day of their admission into the Church. Nay, the teaching in reference to Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist was completely imparted to the newly baptized only during the week following their initiation. The five mystagogical *Catecheses* of St. Cyril, the *De Mysteriis* of St. Ambrose and the *De Sacramentis* are exquisite samples of these tracts in which the teaching of the Church about Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist is briefly summarized for the instruction of neophytes. To this extent it may be said that there was a list of the Sacraments in the Patristic period — a list which comprised three Sacraments and which, as we will see later, was preferred to any other by the early mediæval writers.

As to the other Sacraments, the Fathers of the 4th. and 5th. centuries mention them, but not being prompted by any practical need, they do not attempt to group them. Not even St. Augustine gives a complete enumeration of the Sacraments anywhere in his works, though he had a somewhat elaborate theory on the "*sacramentum.*" [9]

[9] Here are some samples of his enumerations: *Ep.* liv, 1: Sacramentis numero paucissimis, observatione facillimis, significatione praestantissimis, societatem novi populi colligavit [Christus], sicuti est baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius, et si quid aliud in scripturis canonicis commendatur.— *Sermo* ccxxviii, 3: Tractavimus ad eos [Infantes] de sacramento symboli, quod credere debeant. . . . De sacramento orationis dominicae, quomodo

The absence of a list during the Patristic Period is no objection at all to the existence of the sacramental realities, which Jesus Christ bestowed on His Church. This point cannot be insisted on too much. Although our seven Sacraments were not at this period distinguished from the rites which are not Sacraments, they were, however, administered, investigated and defended against heretics.

St. Augustine had to state his views on Baptism and Ordination during the Donatist controversy; and against the Pelagians he had to show that the sanctity of Matrimony can be reconciled with the propagation of original sin. Besides these, all the other Sacraments, except Extreme Unction, are mentioned in his writings. Extreme Unction itself is described in a contemporary document, the letter of Pope Innocent I to Decentius, Bishop of Eugubium. Quite evidently then in the 5th. century, these Sacraments are in the possession of the entire Church, and form part of her life,[10] but circumstances have not yet led her to list them. Later on greater precision will be given to the sacramental doctrine, but in the meantime the sacramental realities will undergo no change; they will remain what they always were.

petant, et de sacramento fontis et baptismi. . . . De sacramento autem altaris sacri, quod hodie viderunt, nihil adhuc audierunt.— *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, v, 28: Si ergo ad hoc valet quod dictum est in evangelio (*Joan.*, ix, 31) . . . ut per peccatorem sacramenta non celebrantur, quomodo exaudit homicidam deprecantem vel super aquam baptismi, vel super oleum, vel super eucharistiam, vel super capita eorum quibus manus imponitur?

[10] In the 5th. century, all the Sacraments are found mentioned, not only in the writings of Catholic authors, but also in those of the Nestorians and Monophysites, who, though schismatics, kept all the Sacraments and have them to-day.

At the ēnd of the Patristic Period, the seven Sacraments are looked upon as *sacramenta,* in the still rather vague sense then given to this term. Baptism, the Eucharist and Matrimony were called *sacramenta* from the time of Tertullian.[11] St. Cyprian applied the name, sacrament, to Confirmation,[12] St. Augustine to Holy Orders,[13] Innocent to Extreme Unction,[14] and St. Gregory the Great to Penance.[15] Thus if the Fathers did not draw up a list of the Sacraments, they at least prepared the data by the aid of which later writers were enabled to arrive at a definitive enumeration of the Sacraments.

§ III. *The Attempts of the Early Middle Ages.*

It was inevitable that the list of the Sacraments should undergo fluctuations. It depended essentially upon the development of the definition of a sacrament and upon the development of the doctrine of Sacraments as efficacious symbols of grace. Such fluctuations, in fact, are quite in evidence in the early Middle Ages.

St. Isidore of Seville, in the 7th. century, distinctly realized the fact that the list of the Sacraments depended upon the definition of a sacrament. He had grasped the method to be followed in working out the list of the Sacraments; but the state of sacramentary theology at that time made it impossible for him to arrive at a definitive result:

[11] TERTULLIAN, *Adv. Marcion.,* iv, 34; v, 18.
[12] *Epist.* lxxii, 1.
[13] *De bapt. cont. Donat.,* i, 2.
[14] *Epist. ad Decentium,* 8.
[15] Cf. HARNACK, *History of Dogma,* vol. 6, p. 202, n. 7.

"Sunt autem sacramenta baptismus et chrisma, corpus et sanguis. Quae ob id sacramenta dicuntur, quia sub tegumento corporalium rerum virtus divina secretius salutem eorumdem sacramentorum operatur, unde et a *secretis* virtutibus, vel a *sacris* sacramenta dicuntur." [16]

This list of Isidore contains but three Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. It was directly inspired by the catecheses of the Fathers in which the teaching of the Church about the three Sacraments of the Christian initiation was explained to neophytes. St. Isidore justifies it by his definition of a sacrament, the wording of which is meant to emphasize the hidden or mysterious virtue of the sacrament. This definition, as we said before, was not a happy one: [17] it led ecclesiastical writers up to the 12th. century to apply the name, sacrament, to the mysteries of our faith such as the Incarnation. The consequence of this confusion was that the working out of the list of the Sacraments was still more delayed. But even with a perfect definition, Isidore could not have succeeded in his task, at such an early date. Penance, especially,[18] was not as yet widely enough considered under the aspect of a *sacramentum*.

The 8th. and 9th. century writers made no fresh attempts to enumerate the Sacraments. They merely reproduced the list of Isidore.[19] Some of them, the

[16] *Etymol.*, lib. vi, cap. 19, n. 37–40. It need not be said that St. Isidore and all writers before the 12th. century were not ignorant of the existence of the other Sacraments, though they did not think of putting them in their lists.

[17] See above, p. 36.

[18] St. Gregory the Great († 604) was the first to use the name *sacramentum* in connection with Penance. This usage, however, did not become general until the time of St. Peter Damian.

[19] Rabanus Maurus, *De cleric. institut.*, i, 24; Ratramnus,

Venerable Bede for example, reckoned but two Sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist, Confirmation being included in Baptism.

It was the intellectual renaissance under Charlemagne, that led ecclesiastical writers to undertake synthetic studies on sacramental questions. From these studies complete lists of the Sacraments were soon to result. The teaching and the training of clerics demanded an exposition of all the liturgical rules necessary for the administration of the Christian rites, as well as the explanation of the sacramental doctrine, the knowledge of which was indispensable.[20]

To supply this need several treatises were compiled. In these the doctrine on the Sacraments was laid down together with the rules for the recitation of the Divine Office, for fasting, the ecclesiastical calendar and indeed every bit of information deemed useful for clerics. A work similar to this had been accomplished in the East, in the 5th. century, by the Pseudo-Dionysius in his *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. Here the ceremonies of Baptism, of the Eucharist, of Confirmation, of ordinations, of the monastic profession and of funerals are explained for the benefit of those whose duty it was to administer the sacred mysteries to the faithful.[21] This Dionysian list of six *mysteries,* based on a too broad definition of the word μυστήριον, was adopted by many other Greek writers subsequent to the 5th. century. Theodore Studita (†826) preserves this enumeration, though he shows himself acquainted,

De corpore et sanguine Domini, 46; Paschasius Radbert, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, 3.

[20] Cf. Rabanus Maurus, *op. cit.*, præfatio. *P.L.*, ciii, 265.

[21] Cf. *Eccl. Hierarch.*, i, 1–3.

with all our Sacraments.[22] Nay, as late as the 13th. century we still find Eastern writers reckoning the monastic profession and funerals in the sacramental septenary.

This work of synthesis led Latin writers of the 11th. century to draw up lists of all the Christian rites in order to make teaching easier, by thus aiding the students' memory. These lists, of course, were based on the definition of a sacrament then received in the schools, namely the formula of St. Augustine: "Sacramentum est sacrum signum."[23] The less comprehensive a term is, the greater is the number of objects to which it may be applied. If a definition of a sacrament which contains only the generic element is accepted as a complete definition, rites, not really Sacraments, will be inevitably considered as such. This is exactly what happened to writers of this epoch.

In a sermon upon the dedication of a church,[24] St. Peter Damian reckons twelve Sacraments:

"In hac [ecclesia] congeritur multiplex varietas sacramentorum, et contegitur antiquitas misericordiarum Domini Dei nostri. Et ut breviter intelligentiolae nostrae propalemus indaginem, duodecim sacramenta sunt in ecclesia, quae unius fidei pietas contegit, circa quorum instantiam reflectitur christianae religionis auctoritas. Primum est baptismatis sacramentum. . . . Secundum est sacramentum confirmationis. . . . Tertium est unctio infirmorum. . . . Quartum est consecratio pontificis. . . . Quintum est inunctio regis. . . . Sextum est sacramen-

[22] Pargoire, *L'Eglise byzantine*, Paris, 1905, p. 336.

[23] Cf. Lanfrancus, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, 12. *P.L.*, cl, 422. Bérenger based on this definition his heretical teaching about the Eucharist.

[24] *Sermo* lxix; *P.L.*, cxliv, 897 sq.

tum dedicationis ecclesiae. . . . Septimum est sacramentum confessionis. . . . Octavum est canonicorum. . . . Nonum est monachorum. . . . Decimum est eremitarum. . . . Undecimum est sanctimonialium. . . . Duodecimum est nuptiarum sacramentum."

This list we must say was not considered by its author as complete, for it contains neither the Eucharist nor Orders, which, however, together with Baptism constitute the "chief Sacraments" of the Church, as the Cardinal of Ostia declared in another passage.[25]

Such hesitations about the proper number of the Sacraments show very clearly the confusion that existed on the subject. This was to last until about the end of the 12th. century. Even in the middle of the 12th. century we find Hildebert of Tours (†1134) reckoning nine Sacraments, and St. Bernard, though not giving a list, leaving it to be understood that the number of the Sacraments is considerable.[26]

On the other hand, many writers of the 11th. century realized how precarious were these enumerations of the Sacraments and preferred to abide by the data of the Fathers. Fulbert of Chartres[27] (†1029) is satisfied with quoting the text of St. Augustine

[25] *Opusc.* vi, Liber qui dicitur *Gratissimus,* 9: Tria profecto praecipua sacramenta in sancta frequentantur ecclesia: baptismus videlicet, corporis quoque et sanguinis Domini salutare mysterium, et ordinatio clericorum.

[26] *Sermo in Coena Domini,* 1. St. Bernard regarded the washing of feet on Holy Thursday as one of the Sacraments. St. Ambrose, *De Mysteriis,* 31–33, likewise regarded as a sacrament the ceremony of the washing of feet, which at Milan followed Baptism. The great majority of ecclesiastical writers, however, excluded this ceremony from the number of the *sacramenta.*

[27] *Sermo* viii; *P.L.,* cxii, 334.

(*Epist.* liv, 1) where two Sacraments are enumerated — Baptism and the Eucharist. Bruno of Wurtzburg, as well as Bérenger, likewise number Baptism and the Eucharist as Sacraments.[28] Others simply reproduce the list of St. Isidore.

All these facts illustrate how uncertain the ecclesiastical writers of this epoch were about the number of the Sacraments. But this very fact accomplished much good by awakening a keen interest in the study of the dogma of the Sacraments. The result was that a new effort was soon made which, with the help of God, succeeded. After passing through a period of obscurity, the dogma of the septenary number showed itself to theologians in all clearness. Though assisted by the Holy Ghost, the Church is not dispensed with working to obtain a clear understanding of revealed truth. Her whole history furnishes abundant illustration of this.

§ IV. *The Number of the Sacraments in the Twelfth Century — Peter Lombard.*

12th. century writers were quite alive to the confusion which existed in the lists of preceding theologians. They soon found the cause of this confusion lay in the imperfect definition of a sacrament which had hitherto been used. Accordingly their first care was to frame a definition which would be suitable to *omni sacramento solique.*[29] Accordingly they defined a sacrament as an efficacious sign of grace. This

[28] Schanz, *Die Lehre von den heilig. Sacram.*, p. 197.

[29] This was the one preoccupation of Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacram.* i, 9, 2; and of the *Summa Sententiarum,* tract. iv, 1; and also of Peter Lombard, *Sent.* IV, Dist. 1, 2.

definition was formulated in view of Baptism which serves as the typical sacrament. It established a criterion which enabled theologians to distinguish among the rites of the Church, those which are productive signs of grace and those which are only simple signs.[30]

This method, as is evident, was strictly logical. It was inevitable that it should lead to a definitive result.

Credit for finding this method is due to the school of Abelard. Skilled in dialectics, the theologians of this school began to apply the rules of their art to theology. As there was but one word, *sacramentum,*[31] to designate the Sacraments and the rites that are not Sacraments, these theologians made a distinction of two kinds of *sacramenta: sacramenta majora, spiritualia,* those important for salvation, and the others, those of less importance.[32] This distinction was the first step towards our distinction between Sacraments and sacramentals. In fact the Sacraments properly so called alone came to be reckoned among the *sacramenta majora.* Hugh of St. Victor, like Abelard, distinguished between the chief Sacraments, "in quibus principaliter salus constat et percipitur," and Sacraments of less importance *(sacramenta minora)* in-

[30] *Summa Sententiarum,* 1. c.: Et hoc est quod distat inter signum et sacramentum; quia ad hoc ut sit signum non aliud exigit nisi ut illud significet cujus perhibetur signum, non ut conferat. Sacramentum vero non solum significat, sed etiam confert illud cujus est signum vel significatio.— See above, pp. 40, ff.

[31] The word *sacramental* which we use today to designate the rites which are not Sacraments was first used by Alexander of Hales. At first it was reserved to the accidental ceremonies of Baptism, but was soon extended to all the rites of ecclesiastical institution.

[32] *Epitome theol. christ.,* 28: Horum sacramentorum alia spiritualia alia non. Spiritualia sunt illa majora, quae scilicet ad salutem valent.

tended to increase the devotion of the faithful, like the sprinkling of holy water and the imposition of ashes, or to supply the objects requisite for Christian worship.[33]

This distinction being made, it still remained to draw up the list of the *sacramenta majora.* To accomplish this, a collective effort was required, for tradition had to be consulted, and its answer could be decisive only through unanimity of theologians. Conformity of belief among theologians is, as all know, the distinctive characteristic of Catholic dogma.

The three Sacraments of Isidore's list were, without any hesitation, reckoned among the *sacramenta majora:* the teaching of tradition was very categorical on this point. Agreement in regard to the other four came more slowly. Abelard's *Epitome* places the anointing of the sick and Matrimony among the chief Sacraments. The efficacy of the anointing of the sick is compared to that of the Eucharist.[34] Matrimony was regarded as a sacrament, not because it confers saving grace directly, but because it remedies an obstacle to salvation, namely concupiscence; and because its symbolism is very lofty.[35] The list of the chief Sacraments in the *De Sacramentis* of Hugh of St. Victor mentions only Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.[36] The other Sacraments, however, all receive emphatic notice in his book, although they still remain confounded with other rites.

The immediate result of the work of the school of

[33] *De Sacramentis,* i, 9, 7; ii, 9, 1. Other writers formulated the distinction differently, dividing the Sacraments into *sacramenta necessitatis* and *sacramenta dignitatis.* Cf. Albert of Liège († 1131), *De misericordia et justitia,* iii, 55; *P.L.,* clxxx, 956.

[34] *Epitome Theologiae christianae,* 30.

[35] *Ibid.,* 28, 31.

[36] *De sacramentis,* ii, 6–8.

Abelard, was not, however, a definitive enumeration of the Sacraments. What it did accomplish was completely to separate the treatment of the seven Sacraments from the treatment of other rites and from the other parts of theology, whereas up to this time the seven Sacraments had never been considered by themselves.

The English Cardinal, Robert Pulleyn, the restorer of the Oxford Academy, in his books of *Sentences* published about 1144, treats all the Sacraments except Extreme Unction.[37] The secondary rites are altogether neglected so as to mark clearly the distinction between them and the true Sacraments. The same preoccupation is noticeable in the *Summa Sententiarum,*[38] where the Sacraments are examined successively and in the same order, that Peter Lombard later follows in his enumeration. So, too, another disciple of the school of Abelard, Roland Bandinelli, later Pope Alexander III [39] gives an exclusive treatise to the doctrine of the Sacraments, following the order of the *Summa.* Here too, Holy Orders is left rather in the back ground, being mentioned only casually in connection with the power of remitting sin. More than this, Roland still calls the Incarnation a sacrament.[40] So there was still something left for Peter Lombard to do before he could differentiate definitively the seven Sacraments from all other parts of the Christian religion.

[37] *Sentent.,* lib. V–VIII; *P.L.,* clxxxvi. He had studied in the 11th. century schools of Paris.

[38] *Sum. Sent.,* tract., v-vii. The sacrament of Holy Orders is merely mentioned, vi, 15, not being treated in a special chapter like the others.

[39] GIETL, *Sent. Rolands,* pp. 195–313.

[40] *Ibid.,* p. 157.

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The reason why the Master of Sentences was enabled to advance beyond his predecessors is to be found in the happy use he made of their method.

When he wrote the fourth book of his *Sentences,* about the year 1148, the enumeration of the seven Sacraments had already been practically made by the *Summae* of the early 12th. century, and the notion of a sacrament had been quite accurately set forth in the *Summa Sententiarum.* But Peter emphasized so strongly the distinction between the Sacraments properly so called, efficacious signs of grace, and the other rites which are mere signs, that the word sacrament came to be used exclusively to designate our seven sacramental rites.[41]

The only change he introduced was to enumerate together all the rites which the definition covered, at the beginning of his treatise on the Sacraments. Previous writers had already set them in a place apart in their *Summae.* But, instead of being satisfied, as they had been, with treating them one after another, the Master of Sentences brought them together at the beginning by giving a list of the Sacraments:

"Jam ad sacramenta novae legis accedamus, quae sunt: Baptismus, Confirmatio, panis benedictio, id est Eucharistia, Paenitentia, Unctio-extrema, Ordo, Conjugium. Quorum alia remedium contra peccatum praebent, et gratiam adjutricem conferunt, ut Baptismus; alia in remedium tantum

[41] *Sent.* IV, Dist. 1, 2: Omne enim sacramentum est signum, sed non e converso. . . . Non ergo significandi tantum gratia sacramenta instituta sunt, sed etiam sanctificandi. Quae enim significandi gratia tantum instituta sunt, solum signa sunt et non sacramenta.

sunt, ut Conjugium; alia gratia et virtute nos fulciunt, ut Eucharistia et Ordo." [42]

Following the teaching of the school of Abelard, Peter Lombard declares that Matrimony helps us to salvation only in a negative way, by offering us a "remedy" against sin. This was its title to be considered a true sacrament. This theory does not satisfy the facts of the case: concupiscence could never be suppressed without grace. Hence Matrimony, to be a remedy against concupiscence, must impart grace. Later this reasoning appealed to many theologians, with the result that, in the time of St. Thomas, the opinion that Matrimony was an efficacious sign of grace was almost universal.[43]

The part the Master of Sentences played in the development of the dogma of the septenary number must not, then, be overestimated. His work consisted chiefly "in consecrating, as it were, the septenary number and in causing to be definitively accepted the method of separating systematically the doctrine of the Sacraments from the other parts of theology." [44] It is impossible to see in the work of Peter Lombard, as Harnack does,[45] the *formal creation* of a new dogma. How did this work of synthesis, begun long since and now completed in the fourth book of the *Sentences,* in any way alter the sacramental realities?

Moreover that the number, seven, was not merely "an idea peculiar to Peter the Lombard" but also an expression of the tradition of the Church, is attested

[42] Dist. 2, 1.

[43] St. Thomas, *In IV. Sent.*, Dist. 2, qu. 2. Cf. Turmel, *Histoire de la Théologie positive*, livre II, Part II, chap. 13.

[44] Portalié, *Bulletin de Littérature ecclésiastique*, 1904, p. 274.

[45] *History of Dogma*, vol. 6, p. 202.

by the fact that it is found in a contemporary document, the Life of St. Otto of Bamberg, the Apostle of Pomerania. This was written about 1150 or 1152. In it the biographer attributes to the bishop of Bamberg a sermon which contains a complete enumeration of the Sacraments:

"Discessurus a vobis, trado vobis quae tradita sunt nobis a Domino, arrham fidei sanctae inter vos et Deum, septem videlicet sacramenta Ecclesiae, quasi septem santificativa dona Sancti Spiritus. . . . Ista ergo septem sacramenta quae iterum vestri causa enumerare libet, Baptismum, Confirmationem, infirmorum Unctionem, Eucharistiam, lapsorum Reconciliationem, Conjugium et Ordines. . . . Quapropter omni honore ac reverentia eadem sacramenta servate, diligite et veneramini; docete ea filios vestros, ut memoriter teneant et diligenter observent in omnes generationes." [46]

Everything inclines us to believe that the text of this sermon was independent of the treatise of Peter Lombard: it expressly mentions the number seven and the Sacraments are enumerated in a different order and under different names.

In the second half of the 12th. century, a treatise ascribed to a priest of Amiens, Robert Paululus,[47] likewise gives a perfectly accurate list of the Sacraments. It is based upon Abelard's distinction of Sacraments

[46] *P.L.*, clxxiii, 1357, 1360. This sermon was addressed to the Pomeranians about 1124, more than twenty years before the composition of the treatise of Peter. But its authenticity is contested. The Bollandists (July 2, vol. I, p. 352) defend it. The *Monumenta Germaniae Script.*, t. XII, p. 738, and t. XV, p. 705, cites this sermon as the work of the biographer of St. Otto. In that case we must date it from 1150–1152.

[47] HAURÉAU, *Hugues de Saint Victor, Nouvel examen de l'édition de ses œuvres*, Paris, 1859, pp. 148–149.

of prime importance and Sacraments of less importance.[48] In the 13th. century the list of Peter Lombard was accepted by all the great scholastics. Their work consisted in explaining in detail the fitness of the number of the Sacraments. In 1274 at the Council of Lyons, the two Churches, the Greek and the Latin, united in professing solemnly the dogma of the septenary number.[49] Such rapidity in diffusion could not be accounted for had this doctrine been invented by Peter Lombard, instead of being a teaching rooted in tradition and supported by Patristic authority. The Master of Sentences, far from creating the dogma, merely formulated the data of tradition more clearly than his predecessors. His work is an elucidation of the dogma rather than a creation properly so called.

Consequently the Protestant contention that the dogma was then created, cannot be taken seriously. Nor can we accept the hypothesis of some Catholic authors[50] who have attempted to explain the silence of the Fathers about the number of the Sacraments by the law of secrecy, the *disciplina arcani.* According to this theory, there would have been, in the Patristic Period, a law which obliged the faithful and the ministers of the Church never to speak ex-

[48] *De caeremoniis, sacramentis, officiis . . . ecclesiasticis,* i, 12; *P.L.,* clxxvii, 388: "Septem sunt principalia sacramenta quae in ecclesia ministrantur, quorum quinque generalia sunt, quia ab eis neuter sexus, nulla aetas, conditio nulla excluditur, videlicet, baptismus, confirmatio, eucharistia, paenitentia, unctio infirmorum. Duo particularia sunt, eo quod non tribuantur omnibus, sed quibusdam hominum, ordines scilicet et conjugium."

[49] DENZINGER, *Enchiridion,* n. 388 (new ed., n. 465).

[50] MERLIN, *Traité historique et dogmatique sur les paroles ou les formes des sept sacrements de l'Église,* chap. v. (MIGNE, *Theologiae cursus,* t. xxi, p. 135); HURTER, *Theol. dogmat. compendium,* t. III, n. 300

plicitly of the mysteries of the Christian religion in the presence of infidels or of catechumens. This law, it is asserted, would explain why we do not find any list of the seven Sacraments in the writings of the Fathers.

Whatever opinion may be held upon the importance of the *disciplina arcani,*[50a] it will certainly be found an insufficient explanation of the late appearance of the list of the Sacraments. When the Fathers were instructing the neophytes in the days which followed the administration of Baptism, they were not bound by the law of secrecy: indeed they explain the doctrine of Baptism and of the Eucharist with copious details. But nowhere is there a list of the Sacraments given. Besides even in the early Middle Ages when the *disciplina arcani* certainly no longer existed, we do not find an enumeration of the seven Sacraments.

The silence of the Fathers and the rather late date at which the number of the Sacraments was fixed are to be accounted for by the development of dogma. The determination of the number of the Sacraments, as we have endeavored to show, was necessarily subordinated, on the one hand to the development of the notion of a sacrament, and on the other to the development of the sacramentary doctrine, which makes us consider our sacramental rites under the systematic conception of an efficacious symbol.[51] This system-

[50a] Cf. Batiffol, *Etudes d'histoire et de théologie, positive,* première série, "L'Arcane."

[51] Such was the opinion of Abbé de Broglie, *Conférences sur la vie surnaturelle,* Paris, 1889, t. iii, *Les sacrements,* p. 306: The rites which possess the power of producing grace have always been practised in the Church. With each one of these ceremonies, was connected traditional teaching about its nature and effects. But the element common to all these different rites,

atization marks considerable doctrinal progress, but it did not in the least alter the sacramental realities.

"After all," says Abbé de Broglie, "the doctrine has been the same during all ages, because all our sacramental rites have always been used with faith in their efficacy. But the systematic and philosophic form has progressed. The proposition that there are seven Sacraments of the New Law, which alone produce grace *ex opere operato,* now a dogma of faith, could not have appeared evident in the 11th. century on account of a lack of precision in language. The Church advances in her knowledge of the truth; she advances slowly and prudently, but yet she does advance: each century adds more precision, more completeness to her knowledge. The condition of this progress is, as we have said elsewhere, the assistance of the Holy Ghost directing human thought, and repressing its errors." [52]

§ V. *The Fitness of the Number of the Sacraments — The Interventions of the Church.*

The great schoolmen of the 13th. century explicitly taught the doctrine of the septenary number and conformably to the custom of their time, they sought the

the *opus operatum,* was not clearly distinguished, in the early centuries, from the other effects proper to each sacrament. . . . Only considerably later was the theoretical classification of the Sacraments made and their number counted. This proves that there had been a rather slow development of the doctrine on this point. The term sacrament, *Sacramentum,* and the Greek term μυστήριον were for a long time without precise meaning, being applied to the mysteries and to all sacred things. Thus do we find careful and orthodox writers enumerating some six, some twelve, Sacraments.

[52] *Ibid.,* pp. 307–308. Cf. OXENHAM, *The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement,* ed. 1895, pp. 19–21.

fitness of it. Why seven Sacraments rather than six or eight? What reasons can be given for this number? Such was the problem they tried to solve.

Theologians sought its solution by studying the effects of the Sacraments and the ends for which they had been instituted. The only possible way to form an idea of the Divine plan of worship, and to recognize the reasons why the sacramental organism should contain seven rites and neither more, nor less, was to make a synthetic study of the effects wrought by the Sacraments.

On the *raison d'être* of the Sacraments, the school of Abelard put forth an idea both suggestive and traditional, which was made use of by later theologians. They asserted that the Sacraments were established as "remedies" for original and actual sin.[53]

Hugh of St. Victor developed this idea conformably to his mystical tendencies.[54] "The Sacraments," said he, "were instituted for three reasons: to humble man, to instruct him and to supply aliment for his activity." When he revolted against his Creator, man was enslaved by concupiscence to creatures inferior to him: by his humble submission to the sacramental elements, he merits reconciliation with God and emancipation from his servitude. Further the Sacraments, by accustoming man to perceive with eyes of faith under

[53] Cf. GIETL, *Sent. Rolands,* pp. 199, 215, etc.— A *Tractatus theologicus* falsely attributed to Hildebert of Tours, but really from the same source as the *Summa Sententiarum,* very clearly expresses Abelard's idea: Contra peccata tam originalia tam actualia . . . inventa sunt sacramentorum remedia, *P.L.,* clxxi, 1145. Cf. ROBERT PAULULUS, *De caeremoniis et officiis eccl.,* i, 12.

[54] *De sacramentis,* i, 9, 3.

material appearances, those invisible realities hidden therein, like remedies in vessels, teach him to raise himself from the sensible to the spiritual, as he would have done without effort in the state of innocence. Finally man, under the sway of concupiscence, is incapable of fixing his activity on one good object alone; his life is taken up with a multiplicity of successive exertions, some of which concern the necessities of life, like eating, drinking and sleeping, while others lead to evil. God, by the Sacraments, offers to man works of virtue in which he can spend a part of his activity, perfecting his inner sanctity. Consequently the Sacraments are eminently remedies, destined to cure the evils caused by sin.

This teaching of Hugh of St. Victor was adopted by the *Summa Sententiarum*,[55] and by Peter Lombard. The latter, however, did not insist much on it. He preferred, whilst holding to the Abelardian idea, to see in Christ the good Samaritan binding up, by His sacraments, the wounds of humanity received from original and from actual sin.[56]

The idea of Abelard rather than the teaching of the mystics was applied to the septenary number by the theologians of the 13th. century. Several systems were elaborated[57] to explain how the seven Sacraments were necessary to counteract sin. They contained much that was arbitrary and subtle.

[55] *Tract.* iv, 1.

[56] *Sent.* IV, Dist. i, 1: Samaritanus enim vulnerato appropians, curationi ejus sacramentorum alligamenta adhibuit, quia contra originalis peccati et actualis vulnera sacramentorum remedia Deus instituit.

[57] Cf. Albert the Great, *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 2, art. 1; St. Thomas, *In IV Sent.*, D. 2, qu. 2, art. 1; Alex. of Hales, IV, q. 5, m. 7, art. 2.

Albert the Great [58] was inclined to believe that the Sacraments were instituted to combat the seven capital sins. He justified his opinion by considerations somewhat fanciful.

Others, among them St. Bonaventure, found a relationship with the seven Christian virtues; the three theological and the four cardinal virtues, and with the seven maladies (septiformis morbus) caused by sin. Baptism corresponds to faith and destroys original sin; Penance corresponds to justice and blots out mortal sin; Extreme Unction corresponds to perseverance, the perfection of fortitude, and remits venial sin; Holy Orders corresponds to prudence, and destroys ignorance, an effect of original sin; the Holy Eucharist corresponds to charity and cures malice, natural to fallen man; Confirmation corresponds to hope and remedies our native weakness; finally Matrimony corresponds to temperance and checks our concupiscence.[59]

It is quite apparent that the theologians did not succeed in justifying the number of the Sacraments on the principles laid down by Abelard without some straining of resemblances. Still this point of view had acquired such an authority in the schools that St. Thomas, who had a better one to propose, believed he ought not to abandon the other altogether. Consequently he mentions it in his *Summa* after his own system.

The fundamental principle of St. Thomas' system is that the organism of the Sacraments extends over

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] ST. BONAVENTURE, *Breviloquium*, vi, 3.

the entire Christian life; over the life of individuals as well as that of the Church. This principle is founded on the analogy which exists between the economy of man's natural life and that of his supernatural life. On account of the harmony existing between the natural and the supernatural, the development of the Christian's spiritual life follows a process quite similar to that of his bodily life. The different stages of the evolution of both lives must be sufficiently correlated, to enable us to find therein the justification of the number of the Sacraments.

The natural life of man is both individual and social. Every one perfects his own personality in the bosom of society, because our individual life and our social life are necessarily correlated.

The development of the individual life begins with generation, the source of being and life; and it attains its perfection by successive growths. An essential condition for that development is the taking of nourishment, without which life could not be sustained. Similarly in the supernatural order, Baptism gives spiritual life to the Christian, by begetting him unto grace; Confirmation perfects this life; and Holy Eucharist, a Divine food, preserves and sustains it.

These three Sacraments would suffice for all the personal needs of the Christian, were there no danger of his supernatural life being lost. But it can be lost like the life of the body. Consequently when the malady of sin is contracted, some means of being cured of it and of repairing its evil effects must be had. To this end Penance is given, to cure the Christian of his faults; and Extreme Unction is added to cause the evil effects to disappear by delivering the forgiven sinner

from that spiritual weakness, the result of sin, which is analogous to the physical weakness of one newly recovering from an illness.

When we come to consider the social life of man, we find it can progressively attain its perfection only when there is, in society, an authority to direct it and when the gaps made by death are filled by the begetting of children. So does the Church, the Christian society, need an authority to govern it; this she obtains through the sacrament of Holy Orders. Matrimony, by continually furnishing her with new members, insures her perpetuity.

St. Thomas ends his explanation by showing its agreement with the then common teaching that the seven Sacraments had been instituted to repair the evils caused by sin.[60]

The system of St. Thomas, though assuredly superior to those of his contemporaries, does not altogether escape arbitrariness. While the institution of seven Sacraments is a fact, it will always be difficult to fathom its ultimate purpose; at least up to the present, all attempts that have been made to do so have proved insufficient. The Angelic Doctor, in order to justify the septenary number, had to strain the analogy between the two lives of man. For instance, the effects of Confirmation do not correspond exactly with the natural growth of the child. Growth comes insensibly, little by little, while in Confirmation perfection in the spiritual life comes all at once to the baptized person. Likewise Penance finds no equivalent in the natural order, because it not only cures the sinner, but it also restores him to the life of grace. Other strained analogies could be pointed out.

[60] *Sum. Theol.*, 3 p., qu. 65, art. 1.

What is particularly worth remembering about this system is the general idea, which is very true and beautiful. By the institution of the Sacraments, Christian life is sanctified at its principal stages. The plan of Jesus, as far as we can follow it with our limited vision, was to embrace the whole Christian life, to sanctify its most solemn moments and to provide for all its needs.

* * *

This work of theologians upon the fitness of the number of the Sacraments indicates that, in the 13th. century the dogma had attained its fullest development. While the Church is making a dogmatic progress, it is seldom that some heresy does not arise to contest the legitimacy of this progress. Then it is that ecclesiastical authority intervenes to condemn error and to define, once for all, the traditional teaching of which Christian society has just become fully conscious. The decisions of councils, the definitions of Sovereign Pontiffs have always been prepared for by a dogmatic development extending over a considerable length of time, and have ordinarily been occasioned by some heresy. The dogma of the septenary number offers a good exemplification of this law.

Towards the end of the 13th. century, precisely at the period of the great development of the sacramental doctrine, the Cathari not only taught, as has been pointed out in the third chapter, that the value of the Christian rites depends on the sanctity of the minister, but also rejected, in accordance with their false spiritualism, the use of material elements in the administration of the Sacraments. They questioned, too, the legitimacy of Matrimony, infant Baptism and tran-

substantiation. The fourth Lateran Council (1215), called by Pope Innocent III for the deliverance of the Holy Land, the reformation of the Church, and the destruction of heresy,[61] formulated in its first *capitulum* a decree directed against the Cathari and the Waldenses.[62] There is no enumeration of the seven Sacraments to be found there. But an extra-conciliary document of the same period does contain an enumeration. This document is the profession of faith addressed by Innocent III in 1210 to the bishops of the provinces where the Waldenses lived. It had to be subscribed to by the heretics desirous of re-entering the Church. The seven Sacraments are successively described and the errors opposed to each formally reproved.[63]

The number of the Sacraments received a far more official sanction in the second Council of Lyons, in 1274.

The Greek Emperor, Michael Paleologus, having manifested a desire for the reunion of his Church with that of Rome, had sent to him in the month of March, 1267, by Pope Clement IV, a symbol of faith, the acceptance of which was made an essential condition of reconciliation.[64] The Emperor replied in a letter which was read during the fourth session of the Council, giving his complete adhesion to the doctrine contained in the Roman symbol. In it was an enumeration of the seven Sacraments.[65] History records

[61] HEFELE, *Hist. des Conciles,* t. viii, p. 112.

[62] HEFELE, *op. cit.,* pp. 119–120; DENZINGER, *Enchiridion,* n. 355–357 (new ed., n. 428–430).

[63] DENZINGER, *Enchiridion,* n. 370 (new ed., n. 424).

[64] HEFELE, *op. cit.,* t. ix, p. 4.

[65] HEFELE, p. 22. Here are its words about the number of the Sacraments: Tenet etiam et docet eadem sancta Romana Ec-

no discussion between the Latins and the Greeks on the subject of the number of the sacramental rites. At the Council of Florence, in the 15th. century, this article of faith was considered as one of those upon which no discord had ever arisen between the two Churches. Is not this a sufficient proof that the dogma of the septenary number is not a human invention, but the expression of the Catholic truth?

Nevertheless though the Eastern Churches like the Latin Church, always possessed the sacramental realities in their integrity, they did not arrive so quickly at an exact enumeration of these realities. "In the Churches of the East," [66] says Abbé de Broglie, sacramental development was slower, confusion existed for a longer time." During the 13th. century and even at the beginning of the 14th. century, some Eastern writers still placed the monastic profession and the funeral ceremony among the number of the seven Sacraments.[67] The Nestorian Ebedjesu (†1318) considers the sign of the cross, and the holy yeast or leaven,— which was thought to be of Apostolic origin and was destined for the making of altar breads,— to belong to the seven Sacraments.[68] The influence of the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius, or heretical fanaticism explain these mistakes. Hence it was still necessary, in the 15th. century, to explain again in detail the sacramental doctrine of the

clesia, septem esse ecclesiastica sacramenta, unum scilicet baptisma. . . . Cf. DENZINGER, n. 388 (new ed., n. 465).

[66] *Op. cit.*, p. 307.

[67] *Perpétuité de la Foi*, t. v, chap. VIII. Cf. FRANZELIN, *De sacramentis in genere*, th. xx.

[68] ASSEMANI, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, t. iii, p. 11, p. 240. Cf. *Diction. de Théol. cathol.* i, 26–27.

Roman Church to the Armenians at the time of their reunion.[69]

The development of the dogma was, as we see, less rapid in the Eastern Churches than in ours. In the actual state of the history of the East, it is very difficult to follow the various phases of the development. [0] At the time of the Council of Florence, this development might be said to be completed. Consequently when the Protestant heresy threatened, the "orthodox" Greek Church rose up with remarkable unison and great energy to condemn it. This shows how completely she had made her own the Catholic doctrine on the Sacraments. The development was worked out in both Churches without any clash or difficulty, because it consisted merely in adapting the theological theory to the sacramental practice which was the same in both. To question this dogmatic progress, as we shall see the Reformers doing, amounts to denying all the religious past of the Greek Church as well as of the Latin Church.

The Protestant heresy in its *ensemble,* was only one vast *protestation* against the dogmatic progress of the Middle Ages. Disdaining the sixteen centuries of Catholic life, the Reformers, contrary to the law of nature, retrograded, pretending to confine all Christianity within the text of the inspired writings. They

[69] This is to be found in the document known under the name of *Decree to the Armenians,* DENZING., nn. 590 sq. (new ed., nn. 695, sqq).

[70] The relations of the Latins with the Greeks, both in the time of the Crusades and during the periods of attempted union, favored this doctrinal development. In the 16th. century the Patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremias, in his reply to the Protestants, makes use of the scholastic theory of matter and form to explain the doctrine of the Greek Church about the Sacraments. Cf. MORIN, *De sacris Ecclesiae ordinationibus,* pars III, Exercit. I, cap. iii, n. 8.

did not see, or they did not care to see, that the Apostolic Church whose legitimacy they recognised, contained all the realities of the future Church; and that the Church of the Middle Ages was only Apostolic Christianity developed, enlarged and become the great tree to whose branches the birds of the air come for shelter. Since Christianity is a living religion, its rule of faith, namely the authority of the Church, must also be living. Dogmatic progress is possible and even necessary, when it is guided by an infallible authority which lives (for life is to be found in motion), but it is inconceivable for those who, like the Reformers, adopt a dead rule of faith, that is, the Bible and the Bible only.[71]

Hence Protestants hastened to reject the septenary number under the pretext that it is not to be found in the Holy Scriptures, and must consequently be a corruption of the Apostolic teaching:

"Principio neganda mihi sunt septem Sacramenta, et tantum tria pro tempore ponenda, Baptismus, Paenitentia, Panis. . . . Quamquam si usu scripturae loqui velim, non nisi unum Sacramentum habeam, et tria signa sacramentalia." [72]

The principles laid down by the Reformers soon recoiled upon them. The Bible alone was incapable of producing any agreement among them as to the num-

[71] Credimus unicam regulam et normam, secundum quam omnia dogmata omnesque doctores aestimari et judicari oporteat, nullam omnino aliam esse, quam prophetica et apostolica scripta cum V. tum N. T. *Formula concordiae* (1574), quoted by HURTER, *Theol. dogm., comp.*, t. i, n. 1081.

[72] LUTHER, *De captivitate babylonica*, Initio. *M. Lutheri opera*, t. ii, p. 275 (Ihenae, 1557).

ber of the Sacraments. Luther himself could not make up his mind. At the beginning of his work *De Captivitate Babylonica,* he admits three. At the end he is inclined to recognise only Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The greatest variety of opinions is to be found among all the Reformers.[73] Some add to Luther's list, Matrimony; others, Penance or Holy Orders. Calvin recognises only Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In brief they agree only on rejecting the number seven. "I say that the Papists," Calvin tells us, "have against them about their numbering of Sacraments, not only the word of God but also the Ancient Church, although they pretend and boast to have these on their side."[74] Now in fact, neither Scripture nor the Early Church is against the number seven. Though the number may not be found, the realities which the number expresses *are* there. Consequently the work of Christian thought which has resulted in the expression of this dogma, is entirely legitimate.

Hence it happened that the Roman Church, which cannot allow the legitimacy of a practice which she has employed for centuries to be questioned, condemned in the Council of Trent the Protestant claims. The Greek Church too, attacked in the most sacred treasures of her religious life by these heretical negations, likewise raised her voice to condemn the Reformers. Indeed she had been directly provoked by them to do so.

[73] Cf. BELLARMINE, *De Sacramentis in genere.,* Lib. II, cap. 23.
[74] *Institut. chrest.,* iv, 19[8].

§ VI. *The Protestant Heresy and the Orthodox Greek Church.*

The Protestants were very eager to draw the Eastern Churches into their errors. To this end, about 1576 the Reformers of Wittenberg sent a Greek translation of the Augsburg confession to Jeremias, Patriarch of Constantinople.

A sort of polemic resulted from this very indiscreet attempt. The Patriarch replied by refuting the Protestant doctrines, especially those that dealt with the Sacraments: "In Chap. VII you say," he declared, "that you also recognise a holy Catholic Church, and that you celebrate in the correct manner the Mysteries and the sacred ceremonies of the Church. To which we reply that there is only one holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christians. . . . The Mysteries received in this same Catholic Church of orthodox Christians and the sacred ceremonies are seven in number: Baptism, the Anointing with the sacred Chrism, Holy Communion, Holy Orders, Matrimony, Penance, and the Holy Oil. As there are seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to Isaias, so are there also seven Mysteries wrought by the Holy Ghost, just seven and no more." [75]

The Wittenberg theologians took this reply of Jeremias as a misunderstanding of their position. They replied by stating their theory more exactly; though

[75] *Perpétuité de la foi sur les sacrements,* tom. V, Liv. i, chap. III. The word mystery (μυστήριον) is defined by Jeremias as a secret sign which has a secret and spiritual effect. It corresponds, then, to our word sacrament.— The authors of the *Perpétuité de la foi* have translated μυστήριον as "sacrament." We corrected this translation.

attenuating it as far as possible, by the aid of their distinction between the Sacraments properly so called, namely Baptism and the Eucharist, and the other Christian rites to which the name, sacrament, in its true sense does not belong. "The Greek Churches believe that there are seven Sacraments and we affirm that to only two of them can this term be properly applied. . . . Even if we were willing to give the name, sacrament, to all the things by which it has pleased God to signify celestial and spiritual realities, we could not limit them to seven. What we call sacrament, are those ceremonies of Divine institution which with the word of Divine promise regarding the remission of sins and the clemency of God towards us, have an exterior symbol attached." [76]

The Patriarch made no reply to that entreaty; but when the Protestants were emboldened to make a third attempt, he let them know that he would have no more correspondence with them on religious questions, and gave them clearly to understand that, if there had been any alteration in the traditional doctrine concerning the Sacraments, it was not to be found in *his* Church.

The belief of the Patriarch Jeremias was that of the whole Greek Church. The protestations which arose, some years later, against the altogether Calvinistic confession of one of his successors, Cyril Lukaris, are good evidence of this.

Cyril Lukaris, a native of Candia, spent his youth in Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Lithuania, becoming initiated through his relations with Protestants,

[76] *Perpétuité de la foi,* Ibid.

into all the doctrines of the Reformation. But so well did he dissemble his opinions, that he was promoted, in 1602, to the patriarchate of Alexandria and, in 1621, to that of Constantinople. In 1629 he published in Geneva his famous Confession, written in Latin; then in 1633, he brought out the Greek text.[77] The knowledge of this document, when it reached the East, and the liberties accorded to the Protestant preachers in Constantinople, finally caused Cyril to be suspected. During his lifetime protestations arose, both in public conferences and in writings, against the Reformation teaching on the sacramental doctrine, which the Patriarch was hypocritically trying to spread.[78]

It was not until 1638, however, after the death of this personage of doubtful attitude, that official opposition began. The successor of Cyril Lukaris, Cyril of Beroe, assembled a synod at Constantinople which, imitating the anathemas of St. Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius, condemned all the propositions of the Lukarian confession. On the subject of the fifteenth, the synod expressed itself as follows: "Let Cyril be anathematised because he teaches and believes that there are not seven Mysteries of the Church, that is to say, Baptism, Chrism, Penance, the Eucharist, the Priesthood, Extreme Unction and Matrimony, according to the institution of Jesus Christ, the tradition of the Apostles and the custom of the Church: and

[77] *Op. cit.*, chap. 4. The text of this confession is to be found in the appendix of Jon Michalcescu's book, *θησαυρὸς τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας, Die Bekenntnisse und die wichtigsten Glaubenszeugnisse der griechisch-orientalischen Kirche im Originaltext* (Leipzig, 1904).

[78] *Perpétuité de la foi,* Ibid.

because he falsely asserts that Jesus Christ in the Gospel has given or instituted but two Sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist." [79]

As might well be expected these doctrinal disputes brought about considerable intellectual perplexity, so that it became necessary to draw up a formula of faith, destined to dissipate all misunderstanding and to bring back unity in belief. Such was the origin of the orthodox Confession (ὀρθόδοξος ὁμολογία) attributed to Peter Mogilas, metropolitan of Kiew.[80] This Confession was examined and approved of by a great number of Eastern patriarchs and bishops. It received its official consecration at the synod of Jassy, 1642, and can be considered as a faithful expression of the belief of the modern orthodox Greeks. It contains a very exact enumeration of the seven Sacraments as vell as an affirmation of their Divine institution and their efficacy.

The errors of Cyril Lukaris were, thus, the occasion of some very serious work undertaken by Greek theologians for the triumph of the traditional teaching. Among them, Meletius of Constantinople (†1664) deserves special mention.[81]

[79] *Op. cit.*, chap. V.

[80] The complete text is to be found in the work of Jon Michalcescu. The doctrine is explained by the method of questions and answers. Here is the answer to the question about the number of the Sacraments: "This article making mention of baptism . . . gives us occasion to examine the seven mysteries of the Church, which are baptism, chrism, or confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, the priesthood, honorable matrimony and Extreme Unction. These seven mysteries correspond to the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost." The following question refers to the divine institution and the efficacy of the mysteries. Cf. *Perpétuité de la foi,* Ibid., chap. V.

[81] *Perpétuité de la foi,* Ibid.

And yet French Protestants, especially Claude, thought themselves warranted, by the Confession of Cyril Lukaris, in asserting conformity of their belief with that of the Greeks. The authors of the *Perpétuité de la Foi* begged M. de Nointel, French ambassador at Constantinople, "to acquaint himself, in their own country, with the belief of the Greeks and the other Orientals." He induced Dositheus, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to call a synod. The acts of this synod which was held at Jerusalem in 1672 proclaimed "that the evangelical Mysteries of the Church are seven in number" (τὰ εὐαγγελικὰ μυστήρια ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησία εἶναι ἑπτά).[82] Once more the orthodox Greek Church marked its disapproval of the heresy of the Reformers. "If anyone says that the seven Mysteries of the New Testament have not been instituted by Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and that there are more or less; let him be anathema."[83] This anathema formulated in 1694 by the same Dositheus against a Greek Calvinist, Caryophylle, is a true expression of the sacramental faith of the Orientals at the end of the 17th. century.

Since that time the orthodox Greeks have remained unswervingly faithful to the old belief.

The patriarch of Constantinople, Anthimius, and his synod, in their reply to the encyclical *Praeclara,* addressed by Leo XIII on the 22d. of June, 1894, to the princes and the people, reiterated their old protestations, already formulated at the Council of Florence, against the introduction of *Filioque* into the Creed, and against certain usages of the Latin Church, such as

[82] *Id.*, chap. VI. The acts of this synod as well as those of the synods of Constantinople (1638) and of Jassy (1642) are contained in the work of Michalcescu.

[83] *Perpétuité,* Ibid.

Baptism by infusion, the consecration of unleavened bread, the neglect of the epiclesis and communion under one species alone.[84] No complaint was made on the subject of sacramental dogma.

Is not this steadfast and continuous conformity of belief between the two Churches which have been enemies for so long a time, a sufficient proof that the dogma of the septenary number is a faithful expression of the sacramental realities granted by Christ to the Christian religion?

[84] DUCHESNE, *The Churches separated from Rome,* ch. III, The Encyclical of Anthimius, pp. 49–50, 58–59.— This chapter has been issued in pamphlet form under the title *The Roman Church before Constantine,* New York, 1909.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF THE SACRAMENTS

It has been said — and with truth — that the lack of documents does not allow us to construct an historical synthesis of Christian origins, which will express the whole reality. Especially in a treatise on the Divine institution of the Sacraments is it proper to bear this in mind. Certainly the present chapter has no pretension to be an adequate expression of the truth. Its purpose is rather negative; its aim, not so much to tell how Christ proceeded in instituting the Sacraments, as to harmonize the doctrine of the Divine institution of the Christian rites with the history of the beginnings of Christianity. On this score, the present essay is then legitimate. It will be found incomplete, perhaps even totally insufficient, but the reader will at least bear in mind the intentions which have inspired it.

§ I. *The Definition of the Council of Trent, and the Theological Hypotheses on the Manner of the Divine Institution of the Sacraments.— Newman's Hypothesis.*

The dogma of the Divine institution of our seven Sacraments was defined by the Council of Trent; "Si quis dixerit Sacramenta Novae Legis non fuisse omnia a Jesu Christo, Domino nostro, instituta; aut esse plura vel pauciora quam septem . . . anathema sit." [1] The seven Sacraments of the Christian religion

[1] *Sess. VII, De Sacramentis in gen.*, can. i.

were without exception instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ: such is the Catholic doctrine, a doctrine which is the great consolation of the faithful, who come so often to draw Divine life from these sacramental springs.

The history of the Council, as well as the interpretations of the best theologians, prove that the Fathers of Trent defined the *fact* of the Divine institution, but that they defined nothing on the *manner* of this institution.

The purpose which the Council had was in fact to condemn the Protestant errors. Now these bore on the fact of the Divine institution, and not on its manner. According to Protestants, the Sacraments, with the exception of Baptism and Holy Eucharist, are purely human institutions, totally foreign to the mind of Our Savior. It was the Divine institution itself which the Protestants rejected; their error did not bear on this or that particular conception of the manner of this institution.

Moreover, at the time of the Council, the controversy as to the *immediate* or *mediate* institution of the sacraments had already begun, for the Spanish theologian, Dominic Soto, expressly affirms this fact in his *Commentary* of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard,[2] written before the definition of Trent. Out of respect for St. Bonaventure and his followers, who maintained the *mediate* institution of several of the Sacraments, the Council did not wish to settle the question by inserting in its definition the word *immediate*.[3]

We may then rightly conclude that any teaching on

[2] *In IV*, Dist. i, qu. 5, art. 2–4. Soto was sent to Trent as a theologian by Charles V in 1545.

[3] P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den heilig. Sacramenten*, p. 113.

the manner of the Divine institution of the Sacraments, which leaves intact the fact of this institution, is not contrary to this teaching of the Church.

Such was the opinion of theologians subsequent to the Council.[4] Without being blamed by the Church, they thought out several hypotheses to explain how Our Savior could have proceeded in the institution of the Sacraments. He could have instituted them *immediately* or *mediately, in specie* or *in genere.* These different hypotheses are based on an interpretation of the Council's definition, which supposes that the question of the institution of the Sacraments is left to the free investigation of Catholic theologians.[5] On this point then research should bear, and the author who finds the true explanation of this will have really justified the dogma historically.

* * *

The hypotheses put forward by theologians to explain the manner of the institution of the Sacraments can be reduced to two: — the hypothesis of the *immediate* institution of some Sacraments and the *mediate* institution of others; and the hypothesis of the *immediate* institution of several of the Sacraments *in*

[4] Franzelin, *op. cit.,* th. xiv: Non tamen consentiunt theologi, utrum hoc sensu institutionis immediatae debeat censeri veritas *de fide* definita in Concilio Tridentino. Aliqui ut Bellarminus et Vasquez id affirmant; Suarez et Arriaga aiunt, veritatem esse certam ex verbis Concilii, non tamen audent dicere simpliciter esse de fide. . . . Eodem fere modo negant etiam alii Ruardus Tapper et Iodocus Ravestein doctores Lovanienses qui interfuerunt Concilio, Estius, Iuenin, Tournely, Cardinalis Gotti, Drouin, etc., hanc institutionem immediatam omnium sacramentorum per Christum in terris versantem esse in Concilio definitam.

[5] Cf. in *Revue Thomiste,* mars-avril 1906, an article by Maurice de Baets on this subject.

specie, and the *immediate* institution of the others *in genere.* To explain.

The institution of the Sacraments is *immediate,* when the author of the Sacraments establishes them himself, in person. It is *mediate,* on the contrary, when he *delegates* to another the power of instituting them. According to the first hypothesis then, Our Lord, while He was on earth, would Himself have established several of the Sacraments, in particular Baptism and Holy Eucharist, and He would have *delegated to His Apostles,* specially directed by the Holy Ghost in the work of founding the Church, the power of instituting the other sacramental rites.[6]

In agreement with the almost universal teaching of theologians, we think that the *mediate* institution is to be rejected. For it fails to show how the Sacraments instituted in virtue of this delegated power, would differ from purely ecclesiastical institutions.

But history, even more than theology, is opposed to this hypothesis. Not a single historical fact authorizes the affirmation that the Church employed this al-

[6] Franzelin, *De Sacr. in gen.,* th. xiv: Posset intelligi [institutio sacramentorum] ita, ut apostoli potestate a Christo ipsis communicata, qua vero sub directione quidem Spiritus Sancti sed tamen suo arbitrio tanquam rectores ecclesiae uterentur, potuerint instituere et instituerint aliqua sacramenta, quibuscum Deus ex Christi meritis conjungeret dignitatem et virtutem ad conferendam gratiam.— The eminent Jesuit mentions, to reprove it, another hypothesis which was, according to him, admitted by certain theologians of the Middle Ages: Posset concipi institutio per apostolos ita, ut post Christi ascensionem Spiritus Sanctus per apostolos tanquam sua organa revelationis et divinae operationis instituerit aliqua sacramenta. Hoc modo apostoli non essent proprie institutores sed potius promulgatores divinae institutionis.— This hypothesis, of which we will speak in exposing the doctrine of the writers of the Middle Ages, is not in agreement with the definition of the Council of Trent.

leged power. When the Church had to defend her Sacraments against the heresies, she never, as will appear again and again in the following pages, thought that she possessed the power of instituting them; on the contrary, she always believed that they came from Christ. How then can we admit that the Church is the depositary of a power of which she was never conscious? Besides, this mediate institution is inconceivable for several of the very Sacraments, to which at first sight it might appear particularly to apply. Thus Matrimony is one of the Sacraments of which the Church became explicitly conscious rather late: a fact which theologians were inclined to explain by the hypothesis of the mediate institution. But the Church instituted nothing in Matrimony, nor is there anything in it which she could institute, because the sacrament of Matrimony consists in the matrimonial contract itself. Now this was certainly not established by the Church: how then could the sacrament be? If finally the sacrament of Matrimony was only of mediate institution, we would have to admit that the Christians of the primitive Church did not receive the sacrament when they married! The hypothesis of the mediate institution seems then altogether untenable.

That of the *immediate* institution would be equally unacceptable, if it were not correctly understood. It can be taken in the strict sense, *in specie,* or in the broad sense, *in genere.* A sacrament, we know, comprises two parts: the external and visible part, which is the sacramental sign, and the internal and invisible, which is the spiritual effect produced. Christ could have Himself determined both parts; He would then have instituted them immediately *in specie.* Or He could have been content to determine the spiritual ef-

fect only and to leave to His Apostles and to His Church the mission of choosing an appropriate sacramental sign: He would then have instituted the Sacraments immediately, but only *in genere.* Baptism and the Eucharist were instituted *in specie;* all theologians agree on that point. As for the other Sacraments, it is possible that they were instituted only *in genere.*[7]

Thus interpreted the *immediate* institution is nearer to the facts, but it still remains incapable of explaining the considerable development which history attests in the sacramental institution of the Christian religion.

It seems then lawful to apply to the institution of the Sacraments Newman's theory of development. Might not the Savior have instituted some Sacraments in an implicit state? Might He not have been satisfied to lay down the essential principles, from which, after a more or less protracted development, would come forth the fully constituted Sacraments?[8] Might there not be in this conception of the origin of the Sacraments, the explanation of this relatively late explicit consciousness, which the Church had of some of her Sacraments?

[7] Duplici modo sacramenta a Christo institui potuerunt: *in genere,* determinando quidem gratiam propriam hujus sacramenti, et statuendo simul adhibendum esse signum ad gratiam illam significandam idoneum, sed Ecclesiae relinquendo hujus signi electionem; *in specie,* eligendo non solum gratiam, sed etiam signum adhibendum, addita lege eo semper utendi. TANQUEREY, *Synopsis theol. dogm.,* t. iii, pp. 197–198.—Modern theologians are more and more inclined to abandon the hypothesis of the immediate institution *in specie* for all, except Baptism and Holy Eucharist.

[8] This is after all what those theologians admit who think that the Savior left to His Church the mission of choosing the sacramental sign of some Sacraments. These Sacraments would not have been fully constituted until the Church had determined their matter and form.

Shall we not be allowed, following in the steps of Newman, to propose a third hypothesis, or rather to modify a little the hypothesis of the immediate institution *in genere,* by saying that Christ instituted all the Sacraments immediately, but did not Himself give them all to the Church fully constituted? On some, particularly essential to Christianity, Baptism and Holy Eucharist for example, Christ explained Himself completely, so that the Church has had from the very beginning full and entire consciousness of these sacramental rites. As to the rest, the Savior laid down their essential principles, leaving to development to show the Apostles and the Church what the Divine Master wished to accomplish. Jesus was not able to say everything to His Apostles: *Non potestis portare modo.* Just as He left to the Holy Ghost the care of making known explicitly to the Church the revealed Catholic dogma, so He could have confided to this same Holy Spirit the mission of unveiling all the riches of the sacramental institution, when the needs of the growing Christian society would demand it. It can thus be understood how, according to the testimony of history, the Church did not have from the very beginning, *a full and entire* consciousness of some Sacraments.

The formula which we shall employ to express this undoubtedly complex doctrine, is this: Jesus instituted immediately and *explicitly* Baptism and Holy Eucharist; He instituted immediately but *implicitly* the five other Sacraments.[9] This statement of the dogma

[9] Like all general formulas, this is too absolute. The degree of implicitness is not in fact the same for the five Sacraments. The meaning of the formula will be made more precise in the following pages.

is not contrary to the definition of the Council of Trent, for, the implicit being real, an implicit institution is a real institution. And this statement is sufficiently justified by history.

§ II. *The Divine Institution of the Sacraments According to Scripture.*

That the Savior instituted Baptism and Holy Eucharist in a very formal manner, the most certain texts make it impossible to deny.

Liberal critics would have Christian Baptism be a creation of the primitive Christian community, a transformation of the Jewish rite of purification[10] and of the baptism of John the Baptist, brought about without any intervention of the will of Jesus.[11] Now this very transformation of the Jewish baptism into Christian Baptism is inexplicable, unless it be the work of the Savior. For, since the first days of the Church, Christian Baptism appears wholly distinct from both the Jewish baptism and that of John the Baptist. This altogether primitive distinction remains inexplicable, if it is denied that Jesus Himself completely settled this point of the Christian worship. A purely human transformation of any institution demands a certain limit of time to be produced.

In the mind of the Apostles and of the first Christians, Christian Baptism was really distinct from the Jewish baptism of John. They were given different names. Christian Baptism was called baptism " in the name of Jesus " from the day of Pentecost; [12] the bap-

[10] *Numb.*, xix, 1–22.
[11] Cf. A. Sabatier, *Religions of Authority*, pp. 51, ff.
[12] *Acts*, ii, 38. Cf. *Acts*, viii, 12; x, 48; xix, 5.

tism of John was designated by the name of the Baptist, "the baptism of John."[13] The effects of the two baptisms were also carefully distinguished: Christian Baptism remits sin and confers the Holy Ghost;[14] the baptism of John was indeed the baptism of penance "unto the remission of sins," but it did not give the Holy Ghost. John the Baptist himself declared the inferiority of his baptism to that of Jesus.[15] Besides, so well persuaded were the Apostles of the insufficiency of John's baptism, that they would give Christian Baptism to those who had received only that of the Baptist.[16]

These facts allow us to affirm, without any rashness, the existence of a very primitive tradition, assigning to Jesus the establishment of Christian Baptism. This tradition is moreover formally attested in the last verses of St. Matthew's Gospel: "Going therefore teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost;"[17] and by the Gospel of St. John, in the interview of Jesus with Nicodemus,[18] where there is question of the Christian Baptism, as the Council of Trent has defined. An impartial criticism could not contest the truthfulness of this tradition.

Equally firm and universal is the Apostolic tradition, attributing to Jesus the institution of the Holy

[13] *Matt.*, xxi, 25; *Lk.*, xx, 4; *Acts*, xix, 3.
[14] *Acts*, ii, 38. Cf. *I Cor.*, vi, 11; *Acts*, xxii, 16.
[15] *Mk.*, i, 8; *Acts*, xi, 16.
[16] *Acts*, xix, 5.
[17] The discussion of the difficulties raised against the authenticity of this text has no place in this synthetic study. It is, besides, possible to show the Divine institution of Baptism with the Acts and the Epistles only.
[18] *Jno.*, iii, 5.

Eucharist, at the time when He celebrated the Last Supper, the night before He died. St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians,[19] written 23 or 28 years after the death of Jesus, narrates this institution. This narrative came from the Savior; the Apostle transmitted it to the Corinthians as he received it.[20] While St. Paul was telling the Corinthians the story of the institution of the Eucharist, the other Apostles were announcing it to the faithful whom they evangelized: the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark attest it. During the Apostolic period, the Holy Eucharist was considered as instituted by Christ, and was celebrated in memory of Him to obey His command. If this tradition bringing back to Christ the institution of the Eucharist is not true, we must give up all certitude.[21]

The Savior then explained Himself clearly in regard to Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. Hence the Church has had from the very beginning full consciousness of these two Sacraments, and this is why the manner of their institution has seemed different from that of the others.

Catholic theology has always taught that Scripture alone, without the aid of Tradition, was incapable of demonstrating the Divine institution of *all* the Sacraments. In fact the Gospels allow us to discern in

[19] *I Cor.*, xi, 24–25. Cf. P. Batiffol, *L'Enseignement de Jésus*, p. 247.

[20] *I Cor.*, xi, 23. For I have received of the Lord that which also I have delivered unto you, (viz.) that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread. . . .

[21] See in *Etudes d'Histoire et de Théologie positive* of Mgr. Batiffol, 2nd. series, pp. 58 ff., the exposition and the criticism of the recent theories of liberal criticism regarding the origin of the Holy Eucharist.

certain acts or certain words of Jesus only the principles whence the other five Sacraments have originated. And if the development of tradition did not teach us that from these words and acts Sacraments arose, we could not even affirm that these words and these acts contained the institution of the several Sacraments. The oak has its beginning in the acorn, but we know this only because experience has shown us that oaks come from acorns. We must proceed in the study of the development of dogma, says Newman, as in the interpretation of the prophetical and typical passages of the Old Testament. "The event which is the development is also the interpretation of the prediction; it provides a fulfillment by imposing a meaning. . . . Now it is but a parallel exercise of reasoning to interpret the previous steps of a development by the later. . . . Those who will not view the beginning in the light of the result, are equally unwilling to let the whole elucidate the parts. The Catholic doctrines . . . are members of one family, and suggestive or correlative or confirmatory or illustrative of each other."[22] To determine then the Divine principles of the Christian Sacraments, let us consider the latter in their full development and search out their origin. This we find in an intention of Jesus manifested by word or act. An application of this doctrine to five Sacraments will make it more clear.

Jesus laid down the essential principle of *Confirmation,* when He promised to give the Holy Ghost. The Savior made this promise to the Apostles; and this promise had as an object not the ordinary giving of the

[22] J. H. Newman, *Development of Christian Doctrine,* old edit., pp. 149, 153–154; new edit., pp. 93, 102–106.

Holy Ghost, as the sanctifier of souls, but a special giving: that which took place on Pentecost.[23]

This promise of the Holy Ghost did not concern the Apostles alone, but all those who were to believe in Jesus and receive His Baptism. As such was it understood by the disciples of Jesus.[24] St. Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost, proclaims that those who will "be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" will receive also the "gift of the Holy Ghost." [25] In fact the Apostles conferred the Holy Ghost on the newly baptized by the laying-on of hands.[26]

This rite of giving the Holy Ghost, although sometimes conferred separately from Baptism, was nevertheless considered as its complement, and as forming with it but one moral whole. Later development has had for effect the complete separation of Confirmation from Baptism. In a certain manner then Baptism has, as Newman remarks, developed into Confirmation.[27]

According to Newman's idea, Baptism developed still further into *Penance,* by a process which may be fairly well conceived.

Jesus gave to His Apostles and by them to His Church, an unlimited power of remitting sins. This

[23] *Lk.,* xxiv, 49; *Acts,* i, 4; *Jno.,* xiv.

[24] *Acts,* xi, 16.

[25] *Acts,* ii, 38.

[26] *Acts,* viii, 14–17; xix, 1–6.

[27] "From the sacramental principle come the Sacraments properly so-called. . . . Of the Sacraments, Baptism is developed into Confirmation on the one hand; into Penance, Purgatory, and Indulgences on the other. . . . Again the doctrine of the Sacraments leads to the doctrine of Justification; Justification to that of Original Sin. . . . Nor do these separate developments stand independent of each other, but by cross relations they are connected, and grow together while they grow from one." *Loc. cit.,* old ed., p. 154; new ed., p. 94.

gift is attested by the whole Gospel history, which shows us the Savior using in a royal manner the power to forgive sins,[28] and declaring to His Apostles, appointed to continue His work, that He gives them all His powers, including that of forgiving sins.[29] This gift is also attested by the Gospel of St. Matthew, according to which Jesus promised to Peter and to the whole Apostolic college an unlimited power of binding and loosing.[30] Besides, the Apostles were themselves so sure that they were the depositaries of this power of forgiving sins, that from the very first days of the Church, they used it in the administration of Baptism. And their conviction that this power came to them from Christ is clearly manifested in the Gospel of St. John: "[Jesus] breathed on them and said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, whose sins you shall retain they are retained." [31]

This power, because unlimited, extends as well to the sins committed after Baptism as to those which were committed before it. In the very beginning, the Church first used the power of forgiving sins committed before the baptismal regeneration. The Apostolic writings mention Baptism especially as the means of remitting sins. For it was well understood, as St. Paul so often repeats, that when one has put on Christ

[28] *Mk.*, ii, 5–10; *Lk.*, vii, 47–49.
[29] *Lk.*, xxiv, 47. Cf. *Mt.*, xxviii, 18.
[30] *Mt.*, xvi, 19; xviii, 18.
[31] This text (*John*, xx, 22–23) mentions the granting by Jesus to the Apostles of an unlimited power of remitting and of retaining the sins committed after Baptism, as the Council of Trent has defined. *Sess.* xiv, can. 3. Confession of sins is willed by Christ, as indispensable to the employment of the power to remit post-baptismal sins.

by Baptism,[32] and is dead to sin in the water of regeneration,[33] he ought to fall no more.

Nevertheless the number of Christians increasing and at the same time the primitive fervor diminishing, many would inevitably fall into sin and indeed such was the fact. Would there be for these *lapsi* no means of salvation? Some so thought in the time of Hermas.[34] But the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, proclaimed that she held from Christ the power of pardoning post-baptismal sins. St. Paul in the affair of the sinner of Corinth had already, it seems, made use of this power. In any case, the documents of the end of the 2nd. century inform us that at this period the Church had a full and entire consciousness of her power to remit post-baptismal sins. The ecclesiastical authority used this power first only partially, excluding certain sins from pardon, for reasons merely disciplinary. At the end of the 3rd. century it made use of it in its entirety.[35]

Penance then appears to us as a second Baptism. It was instituted implicitly by Christ, when He gave His Church an unbounded power of forgiving sins. Christ left to His Church the care of regulating the exercise of this power, and in fact its exercise has during the centuries taken on different forms.[36]

During His ministry in Galilee, Jesus sent His disciples into the towns and villages, with the mission of

[32] *Gal.*, iii, 27.

[33] *Rom.*, vi, 11.

[34] Cf. TIXERONT, *op. cit.*, pp. 123, sq.; BATIFFOL, *op. cit., Origines de la Pénitence*, sect. 1.

[35] On all these facts to which we allude, cf. sup., pp. 105, ff.; 112, ff.

[36] See the views of Newman on this subject, *Development*, old edit., pp. 410, ff.; new edit., pp. 384, ff.

preaching penance, of expelling demons, of healing the sick and of working other prodigies.[37] St. Mark tells us that the Apostles fulfilled the orders of the Master, and healed the sick by anointing them with oil.[38] To relieve the sick by anointing with oil was a Jewish custom.[39]

The text of the Gospel does not tell us whether the Savior had commanded or approved the use of these anointings. But one can assume that He did. For Jesus could not be ignorant of the use the Apostles made of these anointings, all the more so, since it was in virtue of the supernatural power with which He had invested the Apostles, that these anointings cured. It is not rash then to conjecture that the employment of these anointings had been authorized by the Savior.

There exists between these Apostolic anointings and our sacrament of *Extreme Unction* (Last Anointing), certain real resemblances, not only in the rite but in the effects. Catholic tradition following in the footsteps of St. James [40] has for a long time placed bodily healing in the first rank of the effects of Extreme Unction. These resemblances authorize us to connect our sacrament with the anointings of the Galilean ministry, as to the seed whence it sprang.

As to the manner in which this seed has developed, and the circumstance in which the Savior explained His thought on the anointing of the sick, the Gospel history is silent, and we are reduced to conjectures. Here we must remember the insufficiency of written records. What the Gospel history permits us to af-

[37] *Mtt.*, x, 5–8; *Lk.*, ix, 1–2.
[38] *Mk.*, vi, 13.
[39] *Is.*, i, 6; *Lk.*, x, 34.
[40] *Jas.*, v, 14–15.

firm is that the Savior looked as much to the interest of the souls of the sick as to that of their bodies, and that many times He cured the spiritual infirmities at the same time as the bodily ones.[41] The Apostles conforming to a Jewish belief, to which Jesus may have accommodated Himself, were persuaded that every sickness is the result of sin, and that to heal a sick person was at the same time to forgive his sins.[42] The bodily cure and the remission of sins were thus according to their way of looking at it, in a necessary correlation. That Jesus should have explained Himself on the anointing of the sick and have given it for the future a spiritual efficacy, would be altogether in harmony with the Gospel history.

In fact, the *Epistle of St. James*[43] leads us to believe that this explanation was given, and that in any case, primitive Christianity, to which this writing is addressed, already has a well developed conception of the efficacy of the anointing of the sick. These anointings cure the bodily maladies as those of the Galilean ministry, but they also forgive sins. They were performed by the presbyters who are substitutes and successors of the Apostles in the government of the churches. The sick are anointed in the name of the Lord Jesus to signify that these anointings are those of the Lord, and that they are administered in His memory to Christians only.

The sacramental development of the anointing of the sick is far from being ended. It is enough for us to realize how this sacrament can be traced back to Jesus, and how it is "insinuated in Mark" as the

[41] *Mk.*, ii, 5; *Lk.*, xiii, 16.
[42] *Job*, iv-v; *John*, v, 14; ix, 2, 34.
[43] v, 14–15.

Council says,[44] making its own the teaching of the theologians of the 13th. century.

The intention of Jesus to institute the *Christian priesthood* is manifested by the fact that He gave to His Apostles all the powers, with the mission of transmitting them to their successors. The Gospel history in fact shows us the Savior entrusting to His Apostles the power of governing His Church, of remitting sins, and of celebrating the Holy Eucharist. Since the Church is an institution destined to last forever, these powers must necessarily be transmitted to the successors of the Apostles, and so well did the Apostles understand this, that they conferred on their disciples by the rite of imposition of hands all the powers necessary to govern their Churches.[45] It is then easy to understand how Jesus laid down the essential principles of the sacrament of Orders.

But it was only little by little, owing to the development of the constitution of the Church and of the sacramentary theology, that the different degrees of the hierarchy appeared and that the Church became conscious of the sacramental nature of the rites which conferred them.

It is far from being easy to perceive at all clearly the different stages of the development of the hierarchy, the texts not always being coherent.

Without in the least pretending to give a definitive explanation, one can perhaps represent this development as follows: Would not the different degrees of the hierarchy be the successive division of the apos-

[44] *Sess.* xiv. *De Extrema Unctione,* cap. 1. The Council defined (can. 1) that Extreme Unction was instituted by Jesus and promulgated by the Epistle of St. James.

[45] *I Tim.,* iv, 14; *II Tim.,* i, 6.

tolate which was formally instituted by the Savior? During the Apostolic period, the hierarchy would embrace only two degrees, the diaconate whose origin is described in the *Acts*,[46] and the degree to which were promoted those superior ministers, called indifferently, in primitive writings "*episcopoi*" or "*presbyters*."[47] In each of the churches founded by the Apostles, and under their direction was a hierarchy of *episcopoi* and deacons, exercising the liturgical functions.[48] The higher ministers possessed the fulness of the priesthood; they were all bishops in the actual sense of the word.[49] They governed collectively the church confided to their care by the Apostles or by the disciples of the Apostles. Side by side with this hierarchy, the Apostolic writings show us a certain number of other ministers, such as "the prophets," "the doctors"[50] and "the deaconesses," whose functions rather difficult to determine disappeared or were confided to the *episcopoi*.

At a very primitive period, the higher degree of the

[46] vi, 1–6.

[47] "In the title of his letter to the Philippians, written about 63, St. Paul addresses himself to 'the saints in Christ which are at Philippi with the episcopoi and the deacons.' Some years before, on his way to Jerusalem, he had summoned the 'presbyters' of Ephesus and commended to their care the infant church, in which, he said, the Holy Ghost had made them 'episcopoi.' Here already appears an absence of clear distinction between presbyters and episcopoi and the collegiate government of the Church." DUCHESNE, *The Early History of the Church*, c. vii, p. 65. Cf. BATIFFOL, *Études d'Histoire et de Théologie positive*, First series, *La Hiérarchie primitive*. VAN HOOFE, *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. Bishop, II, p. 582.

[48] *Phil.*, i, 1. Cf. *Acts*, xiv, 22; xx, 17; *Tit.* i, 5.

[49] In fact the "presbyters" laid hands on Timothy to ordain him. *I Tim.*, iv, 14.

[50] *Acts*, xiii, 3; and *Eph.*, iv, 11. Cf. *Didachè*, xi, xiii, 2.

hierarchy was subdivided and gave birth to the episcopate and the presbyterate. The collegial episcopate disappeared; each church was governed by a single monarchical bishop, having under his authority priests, his inferiors in dignity, and deacons. Such will be henceforth the composition of the hierarchy of the churches.

The first traces of this threefold hierarchy are found in the lifetime of the Apostles. In Jerusalem, after the dispersion of the Apostles, James, "a brother of the Lord," governs the local church as supreme head, with the help of presbyters and deacons. This monarchical government was continued, about 61, by his successor, Simeon. The situation of Timothy and Titus, as it is described in the Pastoral Epistles, has also many analogies with the monarchical episcopate; for these two men are the heads of their churches, and they have presbyters and deacons under them. The monarchical episcopate existed also at Rome: St. Irenaeus gives us the succession of the bishops of that city from St. Peter to Eleutherius.[51]

The hierarchy of three degrees goes back then, in its beginnings, to Apostolic times. But it became an altogether universal institution only toward the middle of the 2nd. century. For, although in the letter of St. Ignatius of Antioch it appears very clearly at the end of the 1st. century,[52] still in the *Letter* of St. Clement to the Corinthians,[53] written about 90 A.D., and in the *Didache* [54] we still find the hierarchy of two

[51] *Adv. Haer.*, iii, 3.

[52] *Smyrn.*, viii, 1: Obey the bishop as Jesus Christ obeyed His Father; obey the priests as the Apostles and honor the deacons.

[53] *I Clem.*, xlii, 4.

[54] xv, 1.

degrees. If the hierarchy made up of episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate, owes its birth, as one may conjecture, to the successive divisions of the apostolate, founded by Jesus, the powers proper to each one of the degrees of this hierarchy are then all of Divine origin.[55]

The Savior, replying to an insidious question of the Pharisees, proclaimed the unity and the indissolubility of *Marriage,* and declared that polygamy and divorce were contrary to the primitive institution.[56] "Because of the hardness of the heart" of the Jews, Moses allowed divorce; no longer will this be so, and whoever shall repudiate his wife to marry another will commit adultery. Such is the law of the indissolubility of Marriage promulgated by Christ, and which St. Paul will recall to the Christians of Corinth as the precept of the Lord.[57]

The intention of Jesus is not obscure: He wished Matrimony to be for Christians an institution more holy and sacred than it was among the Jews. This character of holiness which Jesus gave to Christian Marriage is the principle of the sacrament. It is in fact by reflecting on the holiness of Marriage, as reformed by Christ, that Christian thought came gradually to the consciousness of its sacramental efficacy, and to the knowledge of the full bearing of this sanctification. For the whole institution of the sacrament of Matrimony consisted — and could only consist — in the sanctification of the matrimonial contract. Jesus' intention of sanctifying is but half manifested to us by the texts; without later development we

[55] Cf. Conc. Trid., Sess. xxiii, *de Sacramento Ordinis,* can. 6.
[56] *Mk.,* x, 2–13.
[57] *I Cor.,* vii, 10–11, 39.

would never have known it in its entirety. But, if development went on, shall we not be justified in concluding that the end of this development is in perfect harmony with its beginning, that is, with the intention of Jesus to render Christian Marriage more perfect than that of the Mosaic Law?

This progressive consciousness of the sanctity of Christian Marriage appeared clearly even during the Apostolic period. St. Paul writing to the Ephesians [58] remarks that the indissoluble union of man and wife is a mysterious symbol of that between Christ and the Church. This lofty symbolism which the Apostle perceives in Christian Marriage shows what a high idea he conceived of the excellency and sanctity of Marriage. This Pauline idea has forever guided Christian thought; from it has sprung to a great extent the sacramental theology of Matrimony.[59]

[58] v, 32.

[59] This manner of conceiving the Divine institution of the Sacraments differs radically from that of M. Loisy, as may be judged from this page of *L'Evangile et l'Eglise, chap.* vi (3e édit.): On peut dire que Jésus au cours de son ministère n'a ni prescrit à ses apôtres ni pratiqué lui-même aucun règlement du culte extérieur qui aurait caractérisé l'Évangile comme religion. Jésus n'a pas plus réglé d'avance le culte chrétien qu'il n'a réglé formellement la constitution et les dogmes de l'Église. C'est que, dans l'Évangile, le christianisme n'était pas encore une religion existant par elle-même. Il ne se posait pas en face du judaïsme légal; les rites mosaïques, pratiqués par le Sauveur et ses disciples, tenaient lieu d'autre institution et satisfaisaient au besoin qu'a toute religion de s'exprimer dans un culte. L'Évangile, comme tel, n'était qu'un mouvement religieux, qui se produisait au sein du judaisme, pour en réaliser parfaitement les principes et les espérances. Ce serait donc chose inconcevable que Jésus, avant sa dernière heure, eût formulé des prescriptions rituelles. Il n'a pu y songer qu'à ce moment suprême, lorsque l'accomplissement immédiat du règne messianique apparut comme impossible en Israël, et qu'un autre accomplissement, mystérieux dans sa perspective, obtenu par la mort du Messie, resta la der-

For Baptism and Eucharist then, the Divine institution is formally stated in the Apostolic writings. And we shall find clear statements of these in the ecclesiastical writers of the first centuries of the Church. As to the Divine institution of the other Sacraments, it emerged only gradually into Catholic consciousness. It remains for us only to point out at what periods and under what influences this work went on in the infallible Church, ever guided by the Holy Spirit.

§ III. *The Dogma of the Divine Institution according to the Fathers — The Thesis of Liberal Protestantism on the Origin of the Sacraments.*

The Divine institution of Baptism and Holy Eucharist is attested to by St. Justin. "We baptize," he says, "those who believe in the truth of the Christian doctrine, for the Savior declared that unless one is born again, one cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." [60] In the same way the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, because "the Apostles in their memoirs which are called gospels, tell us that Jesus gave them

nière chance du royaume de Dieu sur la terre. La cène eucharistique se montre alors comme le symbole du royaume que doit amener le sacrifice de Jésus. Encore est-il que l'eucharistie, au jour de sa célébration première, signifie plutôt l'abrogation du culte ancien et l'avènement prochain du royaume, que l'institution d'un nouveau culte, le regard de Jésus n'embrassant pas l'idée d'une religion nouvelle, d'une Église à fonder, mais toujours l'idée du royaume des cieux, à réaliser.— *Autour d'un petit livre,* p. 7: On perçoit encore sans difficulté, dans le Nouveau Testament, que l'Église n'a été fondée et les sacrements n'ont été institués, à proprement parler, que par le Sauveur glorifié. Il s'ensuit que l'institution de l'Église et des sacrements par le Christ est, comme la glorification de Jésus, un objet de foi, non de démonstration historique.

[60] *I Apol.,* 61.

these recommendations. He took bread and having given thanks, He said, 'Do this in memory of Me. This is My Body.' He took also the chalice, and having given thanks, He said to them, 'This is My Blood.'[61] Similar statements are found in the writings of St. Irenaeus,[62] of Tertullian,[63] and of writers of the following centuries.

The Divine origin of the power of forgiving sins after Baptism was brought into full light at the time of Tertullian. The latter refused Pope Callistus the right of granting the pardon of the Church to sins of the flesh. The Bishop of Rome, on the contrary, affirmed his right, and to justify his merciful measure, alleged the power of the keys which he held from Christ through Peter. (*Matthew,* xvi, 19.)[64] The Church then was conscious that she was the depositary of an unlimited power of forgiving sins, a power coming from Christ, and neither the expostulations of Tertullian nor those of St. Hippolytus[65] succeeded in disturbing her.

Some years later, when the Novatians protested against the reconciliation of the *lapsi,* started by St. Cyprian and authorized by Pope Cornelius, the Church excluded them from her pale. Catholic writers, such as St. Cyprian[66] and after him St. Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona,[67] and St. Ambrose[68] demonstrated to the

[61] *I Apol.,* 66.
[62] St. Irenaeus affirms in several places the institution of the Eucharist by Christ, *Adv. Haer.,* iv, 17, 4–5; iv, 33, 2.
[63] *De Baptis.,* 13; *Adv. Marc.,* iv, 40.
[64] Tertullian, *De Pudicitia,* 21.
[65] *Philos.,* ix, 12.
[66] *Ep. lv.*
[67] *Ep. ad Sempronianum.*
[68] *De Paenitentia.*

Novatians by Holy Scripture and particularly by the text of St. John: *Quorum remiseritis* . . . the Divine origin of the power to forgive all sins without exception.

At the moment, then, when the Novatian crisis occurred, the Church had a complete and entire consciousness of the Divine institution of the power to remit all post-baptismal sins, that is, recognized the Divine institution of what would afterwards be called the sacrament of Penance.

The Divine origin of the different degrees of the ecclesiastical hierarchy was also set into relief on the occasion of an heretical movement, Gnosticism, at the beginning of the 2nd. century.

The Gnostics undertook to interpret the doctrine of Christianity by the help of an unsound philosophy, and without any dependence on the authority of the Church. The defenders of orthodoxy combated them by affirming that the true doctrine of Christ is found only in the teaching of the divinely established hierarchy. St. Ignatius of Antioch, who witnessed the beginning of Judaizing Gnosticism, exhorts incessantly the faithful of Asia, in order to protect them against the heresy, to hold to the doctrine of their bishops, priests and deacons, and to do nothing without the Bishop.[69] The Bishop, his priests and deacons were in fact founded by the will of Christ and confirmed by the Holy Spirit.[70] St. Irenaeus, some years later, to decide between orthodox and heretics, also refers to the teaching of the bishops of the universal

[69] *Phila.*, vii.
[70] *Phila.*, Inscr; Cf. *Eph.*, iii; *Trall.*, III; *Smyrn.*, viii.

Church, and principally to the teaching of the Church of Rome.[71]

The Divine institution of the hierarchy was also affirmed on the occasion of certain local difficulties, relative to the government of the churches. Toward the end of the 1st. century, the Church of Corinth was in revolt against its legitimate heads. St. Clement of Rome had to intervene. "We must respect our heads," says he[72] to the Corinthians, "for the Apostles instituted the *episcopoi* and the deacons, and the Apostles were sent by Christ just as Christ was sent by God."[73] When a century and a half later the arrogant confessors and martyrs of Carthage pretended to dispense with the Bishop and the priests in the reconciliation of the *lapsi,* St. Cyprian made an elaborate protest. According to the Divine law, given by Christ, he said, the Church is built upon the bishops, the succession of whom goes back to St. Peter, and upon the clergy. Nothing ought to be done in the Church without the authorization of the bishops:

"Dominus noster, cujus praecepta metuere et servare debemus, episcopi honorem et ecclesiae suae rationem disponens in evangelio loquitur et dicit Petro: *Ego tibi dico quia tu es Petrus.* . . . Inde per temporum et successionum vices episcoporum ordinatio et ecclesiae ratio decurrit ut ecclesia super episcopos constituatur et omnis actus ecclesiae per eosdem praepositos gubernetur. Cum hoc ita divina lege fundatum sit, miror quosdam audaci temeritate sic mihi scribere voluisse ut ecclesiae nomine litteras facerent, quando ecclesia in episcopo et clero et in omnibus stantibus sit constituta."[74]

[71] *Adv. Haer.,* iii, 3, 1, 2.
[72] *I Clem.,* xxi, 6.
[73] *Ibid.,* xlii, 4.
[74] *Epist.* i, 1.

In different places, the Bishop of Carthage speaks of the ordinations by which "the Divine priesthood" [75] and the other orders are conferred.[76]

The rite of episcopal Ordination is the laying on of hands,[77] and this Ordination is just as much of Divine right as the order which it confers.

The development of tradition on the subject of the Divine institution of the sacrament of Holy Orders took place without giving rise to any serious controversy. The Montanist theory of Tertullian according to which all Christians were vested with the priesthood [78] was considered an eccentric doctrine. The thesis of St. Jerome,[79] the counterpart of which is found in St. Epiphanius [80] and according to which the distinction of episcopate and presbyterate would not be of Divine right, made only a slight impression on ecclesiastical writers.

Hence at the time of St. Augustine, Ordination was considered as a *Sacramentum Domini,*[81] and in the Middle Ages, Hugh of St. Victor [82] and Peter Lombard [83] affirmed their belief in the Divine institution of the different orders, by showing how the Savior exercised all their functions and gave the Church the command to imitate Him.

Besides the three degrees of the episcopate, presby-

[75] *Ibid.*
[76] *Ep.* xxxviii, 2; lxvi, 1, etc.
[77] *Ep.* lxvii, 5.
[78] *De Monog.*, 12.
[79] *In Tit.*, i, 5. *Epistola 146, ad Evangelum.* Cf. SANDERS, *Etudes sur S. Jérome.*
[80] *Haer.*, 75, 4–5.
[81] *De Bono Conj.*, 32.
[82] *De Sac.* lib. ii, pars iii, c. 5, seq.
[83] *Sent.*, iv, 24.

terate and diaconate, there appeared in the 3rd. century, certain inferior orders. In Rome according to the letter written in 251 by Pope Cornelius,[84] to Fabius, the Bishop of Antioch, there were five: those of subdeacon, acolyte, exorcist, lector and porter. In the East, there were only two: the subdiaconate and the order of lectors. These inferior orders appear historically as subdivisions of the diaconal functions. As such they are participations of the priesthood, instituted by Christ, as is taught by a school of theologians following in the footsteps of St. Thomas.

In the Patristic period, the doctrine of the sanctity of Christian Matrimony, one and indissoluble, was developed, in the instructions given by pastors to married Christians, and on the occasion of errors put forth on this subject by false teachers.

Marriage is placed under the supervision of the Bishop, says St. Ignatius; it must be according to the Lord and not according to passion.[85] And the Church has always defended it as a sacred good which Jesus had entrusted to her, and has surrounded it, from the very beginning, with holy ceremonies, of such nature as to enhance its excellence in the eyes of the faithful.

At the end of the 2nd. century, according to the testimony of Tertullian, Marriage had to be contracted before the Church, to be recognized as truly legitimate;[86] for the Church forms its bond, the holy oblation confirms it, and the sacerdotal blessing seals

[84] *Euseb., H. E.*, vi, 43. Cf. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 344.

[85] *Ad Polyc.*, v, 2.

[86] *De Pud.*, 4.

it.[87] Tertullian, it is true, under the sway of Montanist rigorism, contended later against remarriages, to which, in fact, he had never been favorable, and he went even so far as to condemn the principle itself of the union of the sexes. But these Montanist excesses do not weaken the value of the testimony of the Catholic Tertullian.

In the 2nd. century, the Encratic[88] and Gnostic sects, inspired by those philosophical theories, then widely diffused, relative to the essentially evil character of matter, condemned Marriage because it propagated the flesh. They were combated by the ecclesiastical writers of the time, especially by Clement of Alexandria.[89]

The Manicheans, in the 4th. and 5th. centuries, revived the errors of the Gnostics. This time in order to destroy them completely, the Fathers insisted on the divine origin of Christian Marriage. How could Marriage be bad, when it was *sanctified* by Christ, both when He was present at the wedding-feast of Cana, as was stated by St. Epiphanius,[90] St. Gregory Nazianzen, [91] and by St. Cyril of Alexandria,[92] and when He pronounced the word: *Et erunt duo in carne una,* according to St. Ambrose.[93] Such was the idea of the sanctity of the conjugal tie then existing, that many hesitated to recognize the lawfulness of remarriage.[94]

[87] *Ad Uxor.,* ii, 9.
[88] Cf. Tixeront, pp. 208–209.
[89] *Strom.,* iii, 16. Cf. Tertull. *Adv. Marc.,* i, 29.
[90] *Haer.,* 67, 6.
[91] *Orat.* xl, 18.
[92] *In Joann.,* ii, 11.
[93] *Epis.* xlii, 3.
[94] *Synod of Caesarea,* can. 3, 7. Hefele, *History of Councils,* vol. I, pp. 224–227.

The most explicit teaching, however, is given by St. Augustine. The holy Bishop had to defend Marriage not only against the Manichean doctrines, but also against his own doctrine of original sin. This doctrine the Pelagians found of a nature to dishonor married life, which propagates original sin. Marriage is holy, he explains, because it is the "sacramentum," the symbol, of the union of Christ with His Church.[95] And it was by assisting at the wedding-feast of Cana, that the Savior unveiled this symbolism:

"Dominus invitatus venit ad nuptias, etiam excepta mystica significatione, confirmare voluit quod ipse fecit nuptias. . . . Ipsae [virgines] pertinent ad nuptias cum tota ecclesia, in quibus nuptiis sponsus est Christus. Ac per hoc ergo Dominus invitatus venit ad nuptias, ut conjugalis castitas firmaretur, et ostenderetur sacramentum nuptiarum: quia et illarum nuptiarum sponsus personam Domini figurabat cui dictum est: *Servasti bonum vinum usque adhuc.*" [96]

Henceforth the Divine institution of Marriage as a *sacramentum,* i.e., as a holy symbol of the union of Christ with His Church, will be universally acknowledged. Later tradition will make more precise the sacramental efficacy of this Divine symbol, and will show that Marriage is holy as being a source of holiness.

The existence of Confirmation *as a sacrament really distinct from Baptism,* is formally stated by the writers of the 5th. century.[97]

[95] *De Bono Conj.,* 21, 32.

[96] *In Joann.,* tr. ix, 2.

[97] In particular by Pope Innocent I, in his letter to Decentius, Bishop of Eugubium. Cf. Denz., *Enchir.,* n. 60 (new edit., n. 98). From the beginning the distinction, at least virtual, of the two rites, Baptism and the anointing with chrism, was taught;

The creation of country parishes was the occasion of this absolute distinction. While the Bishop presided over the solemn administration of Baptism, Confirmation was given to the neophytes immediately after the baptismal immersion: it was given separately only to those who had received clinical Baptism during their sickness. When the country parishes were founded and confided to the care of simple priests, the Bishop reserved Confirmation to himself, in the West. At that time, a more or less protracted period began to separate the reception of the two Sacraments and thereby accentuate their distinction. In the East, priests in charge of parishes were given the right to confirm immediately after Baptism, a custom which is still in existence.[98]

As to the origin of Confirmation, the Fathers contented themselves with identifying this sacrament with the Apostolic rite of conferring the Holy Ghost.[99] The sacramental rite of Confirmation embraces not only the laying on of hands, but also an anointing with blessed and scented oil. This anointing was introduced in the 2nd. century under an exclusively Biblical and Christian inspiration. St. Paul compares the action of God in a baptized person to an anointing.[1] Christ was anointed (χριστός) by His Father;[2] it is fitting that the Christian (χριστιανός) should receive a bodily anointing, in His initiation into the re-

but in the 5th. century, in the West, the distinction became a complete separation.

[98] Cf. DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship*, p. 338.

[99] ST. CYPRIAN, *Ep.*, lxxiii, 9; INNOCENT I. *Ep. ad Decent.*, 3; ST. AUG., *De Trin.*, xv, 26. Cf. TURMEL, *Hist. de la Théologie Positive*, l. i, par. i, ch. x and l. ii, p. i, ch. ix.

[1] *II Cor.*, i, 21.

[2] *Heb.*, i, 9.

ligion of Christ. This symbolism of anointing which expresses so well the Christian consecration, is explained by Tertullian: "The anointing of the newly baptized," he says, "recalls the sacerdotal anointing which Aaron received from Moses and the one which was given spiritually to Christ." [3] A like doctrine is taught by contemporary and succeeding writers, when they treat of Confirmation. "Holy oil," declares Didymus,[4] "with which Aaron was anointed and with which the priests of the Old Law also were anointed, was the figure of the anointing with holy chrism which we all receive."

Before the beginning of the 5th. century, the only known Patristic documents that allude to the anointing of the sick, are the liturgical texts. The Euchologium of Serapion of the middle of the 4th. century, contains a formula for blessing the oil of the sick, which was evidently inspired by the Epistle of St. James: [5] "We beseech Thee who hast all power and strength, the Savior of all men, the Father of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and we pray Thee to send from Heaven the healing power of the Only Begotten upon this oil, that it may become to those who are anointed by, or who partake of, these Thy creatures, for a throwing off of every sickness and every infirmity, for a remedy against every demon, for a separation of every unclean spirit, for an expulsion of every evil agent, for a driving out of all fever and ague,

[3] *De Bapt.*, 7. Cf. Theoph. of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum*, i, 12: We are called Christians because we have been anointed with divine oil (*καλούμεθα χριστιανοί ὅτι χριόμεθα ἔλαιον θεοῦ*).

[4] *De Trin.*, ii, 14; *P.G.*, xxxix, 712.

[5] xxix, Ed. Funk. The title reads as follows: "Prayer for the blessing of the oil for the sick, of bread and water."

and every infirmity, for good grace and remission of sins, for a medicine of life and salvation, for health and soundness of soul, body, spirit, for perfect strengthening. O Master, let every Satanic agency, every demon, every snare of the adversary, every plague, every scourge, every pain, every labor or stroke or shaking of evil shadowing, fear Thy holy Name which we have now invoked, and the Name of the Only Begotten; and let them depart from the inward and the outward parts of these servants, that His Name may be glorified, who for us was crucified and rose again, who took up our sicknesses and our infirmities, Jesus Christ, and who is coming to judge the quick and the dead. Because through Him to Thee, the glory and the power in the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen." [6]

The effects of the anointing of the sick, described by St. James,— the healing of the body and the remission of sins, are very clearly indicated in this prayer. We are then justified in concluding that the rite of anointing the sick was employed in the Patristic period, despite the silence of writers prior to the 5th. century.

What confirms this conclusion is the practice of the bishops, attested by the *Canons of Hippolytus*,[7] of

[6] Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book. S.P.C.K. 1899, pp. 77–78. Cf. *Const. Ap.*, viii, 29, and *Test. Dom. Nos. Jes. Christ.* (ed. RAHMANI), p. 49.

[7] 199–200 (DUCHESNE, *Christian Worship*, pp. 537, 538). "Sit diaconus qui episcopum comitetur omni tempore illique indicet singulos infirmos. Magna enim res est infirmo a principe sacerdotum visitari: reconvalescit a morbo quando episcopus ad eum venit imprimis si super eo orat, quia umbra Petri sanavit infirmum." The text does not speak of anointings.— Innocent I in his letter to Decentius says that the visiting of the sick, to anoint them with oil blessed by the bishop, is also done by priests, "quia episcopi occupationibus aliis impediti ad omnes languidos ire non possunt."

visiting the sick, to pray over them, and also the generality of the use of these anointings, and the precise idea which was had of them in Rome at the beginning of the 5th. century. Pope Innocent I in his letter to Decentius, Bishop of Eugubium, declares that the anointings, of which St. James speaks, are the same as those which were then given to the sick among the faithful by the priests or by their own relatives, with the oil blessed by the Bishop:

"Quod non est dubium de fidelibus aegrotantibus accipi vel intelligi debere [illud Jacobi], qui sancto oleo chrismatis perungi possunt, quod ab episcopo confectum, non solum sacerdotibus sed et omnibus uti Christianis licet in sua aut suorum necessitate inungendum."

Innocent calls the oil of the sick, blessed by the Bishop, "a sort of sacrament," which on this account should not be given to penitents. "Nam paenitentibus istud infundi non potest, quia genus sacramenti est. Nam quibus reliqua sacramenta negantur, quomodo unum genus putatur posse concedi?" Later development will more clearly distinguish the anointings given by the priests from those which are given by the simple faithful in case of sickness.

St. Cyril of Alexandria[8] identifies the practice of the anointing of the sick with the rite described in the Epistle of St. James, and he recommends insistently to the faithful recourse to it rather than to the magicians. St. Cæsarius of Arles does the same.[9] All writers then see in the text of St. James the origin and the

[8] *De ador. in spir. et ver.*, lib. vi. *P.G.*, lxviii, 472.

[9] See above p 155. Only Origen, *Hom.* ii, 4, *in Lev.*, and St. John Chrys. *de Sacerdot.*, iii, 6, apply the text of St. James to Penance.

efficacy of the custom of anointing the sick among the faithful with oil blessed for the purpose.[10]

* * *

A considerable progress then in worship and hierarchy took place in the Patristic period. This development is lawful, for it is homogeneous with its starting point, viz., the principles laid down by Christ.

Protestant historians affirm for the most part that the development took place under the influence of Hellenic religions: the Church of the 2nd. and 3rd. centuries would have appropriated, with slight modification, the superstitious rites of the Pagan mysteries, to reconcile the more easily the minds of the Græco-Roman world. According to Harnack,[11] Confirmation would be due to Mithraic infiltrations, and the Pagan influences would have also been particularly felt in the constitution of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and in the development of the Christian cult in general.[12]

These systematic affirmations are inspired more by the prejudices of liberal Protestantism, according to which Christ would have instituted a religion without external worship, "the religion of the spirit," than by an impartial study of ecclesiastical literature.

In tracing back the historical development of the Christian worship, one is struck by this fact, that the inspiration which guided it is exclusively Christian. It was the Apostles who established the *episcopoi* and

[10] TURMEL, *Hist. de la Théol. Pos.* liv. i, par. i, ch. xiii, and liv. ii, par. i, ch. xii. Cf. BOUDINHON, *La théologie de l'extrême onction,* in *Revue des Eglises,* 1905, pp. 345, ff. This article is a review of FULLER, *The Anointing of the Sick,* 1904.

[11] *History of Dogma,* vol. ii, p. 141, note.

[12] *Id.,* pp. 195–207.

the presbyters, declares St. Clement of Rome; it was Christ, it was the Holy Spirit, who instituted bishops, priests and deacons, proclaims in his turn St. Ignatius of Antioch. Confirmation is considered as the continuation of the Apostolic rite described in the Acts, and when the Church adds to this rite the anointing with scented oil, it is in Holy Scripture and not in Pagan rites that she finds the idea. Baptism and the Holy Eucharist are celebrated because Christ commanded it.

Besides when one knows the aversion of the first Christians to Paganism, the idea that "they could have sought models, for whatever purpose, in the institutions which they held in horror, seems altogether unacceptable." [13] That later, when Paganism was totally vanquished, in the 4th. and 5th. centuries, the Church christianized certain Pagan institutions, feasts for example, in order to change their character, powerless as she was to suppress them, is incontestable. But in the 2nd. and 3rd. centuries,— the period of the sacramental development,— the conditions in which Christianity found itself in relation to Paganism and the spirit which animated the ecclesiastical writers, rendered facts of such a nature impossible. To be convinced of this, it is sufficient to read the violent diatribe of Clement of Alexandria [14] against the Pagan rites whose impiety and obscenity are revolting, or the *De Corona* of Tertullian, in which the hatred of Paganism is pushed so far as to refuse a Christian soldier the right of wearing the laurel crown in a military festival.[15]

[13] DUCHESNE, *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, p. 10, note 2 (edit. 1889).

[14] *Cohort. ad Gent.*, cap. 2.

[15] Tertullian has written three treatises, *De Spectaculis, De*

Stress is indeed laid on the resemblances which exist between certain Pagan rites and the Christian rites. The Mithraic cult in particular offers certain striking resemblances to Christianity. The Mithraists were initiated by a baptismal rite accompanied by other ceremonies analogous to Confirmation and Communion.

But do these resemblances necessarily postulate an interdependence? And if there has been such an influence exercised, which of the two cults copied the other? Christianity, according to Harnack. Contemporary Christian writers, well placed to gain knowledge of this, affirm on the contrary, that it is Mithracism. "The evil demons," says St. Justin, "have imitated this institution (the Holy Eucharist) in the mysteries of Mithra: they take bread and a cup of water in the ceremonies of initiation, and they pronounce certain formulas which you know or can find out." [16] It is the devil's part, Tertullian affirms, to pervert truth. "Does he not ape in the mysteries of idols the things of the Divine faith? He also baptises his believers, his faithful, and promises to make their faults disappear by a laver of his own. If I am not mistaken, Mithra signs the forehead of his soldiers and celebrates the oblation of bread." [17] But, declares Tertullian, these baptisms of Mithra as well as those of the other Pagan cults, of Isis and of Eleusis

Corona, and *De Idololatria,* to explain the duties which a Christian must fulfil to avoid idolatry.

[16] *I Apol.,* 66. In vain has Harnack tried to show, to strengthen his thesis, that the official usage of the primitive Church was to celebrate the Eucharist with bread and water only. (*Texte und Untersuchungen,* vii, 2.) The practice of using water only was reproved by St. Cyprian (*Ep.* lxiii) and the bishops who had unlawfully adopted it were inspired by motives altogether foreign to the Mithraic cult.

[17] *De Praescr.,* 40. Cf. *De Corona,* 15.

among others, are vain and useless; they are the lying and diabolical counterfeits of the divine operation.[18]

This language clearly leaves it to be understood that if any religion imitated the others, it was not Christianity.[19] If the writers of the end of the 2nd. century had been the witnesses and the contemporaries of these Pagan infiltrations into Christian worship, would not their hatred of Paganism and the accusations of plagiarism which they hurl against it, be altogether incomprehensible?

In reality, the influence of Hellenic cults could have been exercised on Christianity only in an absolutely extrinsic way: in this sense, that Christianity, in order to oppose the surrounding religions and show itself totally distinct and different from them, should have surrounded its worship with a mysterious external apparel. Only the initiated could be present at its assemblies, and secrecy was demanded of the members of the Christian communities. This external apparel of the Christian worship disappears with the circumstances which gave it birth, and it was replaced by others conformed to the social relations of the different periods of the history of Christianity. This influence which Paganism could have exercised on the Christian religion, is not then a creative influence, which would have given birth to our Sacraments; it touched only the exterior, only the entirely accidental forms of worship. The internal development of the Christian worship went on — the documents give evidence of it — conformably to the principles laid down by Christ and

[18] *De Bapt.*, 5. St. Justin, *I Apol.*, 62, also accuses the devils of imitating the Christian Baptism.

[19] Cf. Th. Mommsen and J. Marquardt, *Manuel des Antiquités Romaines. Le culte chez les Romains*, t. i, p. 108 ff. (Fr. tr.); also Fr. Cumont, *Les Mystères de Mithra*, c. 5.

His Apostles and under the guarantee of the severe control of the Church.

The history of the dogma of the efficacy, set forth in the third chapter, is itself another demonstration of the exclusively Christian origin of our Sacraments. If, in fact, the Church had sought its sacred rites in the Hellenic religions, it would likewise have adopted the idea which these religions had of the efficacy of their rites.[20] Now the Catholic doctrine of the efficacy of the Sacraments is an original doctrine, wholly different from the conception which the Pagans had of the efficacy of their mysteries. These acted magically, i. e. they did not demand on the part of those who received them any moral coöperation, any true conversion of the heart, whereas the Christian Sacraments give salvation only to those who have repaired by a serious penance their past disorders and who are "totally dead to sin." Tertullian,[21] as will be remembered, insists so much on this penance preparatory to Baptism, that he seems to accord to it almost the whole work of the regeneration of the Christian. The teaching of Tertullian is also that of all the Fathers, who always feared lest catechumens should descend with unrepentant souls into the baptismal waters.

It is not Paganism which could have inspired Christian writers with such a just idea of the efficacy of the Sacraments; it is the traditional teaching of the Church. Besides we have on this point the positive

[20] Harnack, *l. c.*, and many other Protestants with him pretend that the Church really derived from Paganism its doctrine of the sacramental efficacy. According to these writers the efficacy which Catholics assign to their Sacraments is a "magical and superstitious" efficacy, such as the Pagans attributed to their rites!

[21] *De Paen.*, i, 6.

testimony of the ecclesiastical writers. Christians are regenerated and washed in the water, says St. Justin, conformably to the doctrine which the Apostles have transmitted to us.[22] The water has the power of regenerating, declares Tertullian, because at the beginning of the world, it was consecrated by the Spirit of God who rested upon it.[23] Salvation is impossible without baptismal ablution, for Christ said, "If any one be not born again of water, he has not life in him." [24]

Tertullian, it is true, to demonstrate that the doctrine of the regenerative efficacy of baptismal water contains nothing absurd, alleges the belief of the Pagans in the efficacy of their religious ablutions, and finds in it a proof that the water possesses a power of purifying. But he adds also that this Pagan belief is vain, and founded on a diabolical fraud.[25] The Christian faith alone is conformable to reality, for it is founded on the testimony of God Himself.

The Christian writers of the 2nd. and 3rd. centuries constantly set in opposition Christianity, a Divine institution, to Paganism, a diabolical institution. It is then incredible that the Christians would have sought their doctrine in an institution so hostile and so detested. It is very desirable that Catholic science should dispose once for all of those prejudiced Protestant positions.

[22] *I Apol.*, 61.
[23] *De Bapt.*, 3.
[24] *De Bapt.*, 12.
[25] *De Bapt.*, 5.

§ IV. *The Dogma of the Divine Institution According to the Theologians.*

a. The Fact of the Divine Institution of the Seven Sacraments is Affirmed.

The theologians of the Middle Ages, as was their method, collected in a vast synthesis all the data of tradition and laid down a general statement of the Divine institution of the seven Sacraments. Before them, St. Augustine had indeed declared, in sentences of an apparently sweeping character, that the Christian Sacraments have Christ for their author. But the context shows that he had in view only Baptism and the Holy Eucharist.[26] In the Middle Ages, the list of the seven Sacraments being clearly fixed, the question of their Divine institution was treated systematically.

The Fathers had clearly taught that Baptism, Eucharist, Penance, Holy Orders and Matrimony came from Christ; they did not speak explicitly of the institution of Confirmation nor of Extreme Unction.[27] In the 12th. century, writers said commonly enough that these two Sacraments were instituted by the Apostles,[28] without specifying whether the Apostles had received from Christ a special delegation to this effect. But this teaching was soon made precise, for a rite which is efficacious of grace and capable of "causing" it, can have no one but God for its author. The dogma of the efficacy of the Sacraments, which is in a certain

[26] Supra, pp. 31–32.

[27] Turmel, *l. c.*

[28] Roland (Gietl, *Die Sent. Rolands*, p. 213); Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, ii, par. 15, 2; *Summa Sent.*, vi, 15; P. Lombard, *Sent.* iv, 23, 2.

manner the generator of sacramentary theology, was then leading the writers to an exact understanding of the origin of Confirmation and Extreme Unction. So the Divine institution of the seven Sacraments of the Christian religion is universally affirmed in the first half of the 13th. century.[29]

It was indeed by reflecting on the marvellous efficacy of the Sacraments that the Catholic mind clearly perceived the dogma of the Divine institution of the seven Sacraments. It is from God alone, St. Thomas remarks, that the power of the Sacraments comes; they could, then, have none but God for their author.[30] It was Christ who instituted them; as God, He had absolute power over the Sacraments, and as man, He possessed a high ministerial power, of which He made use in establishing the Christian rites.[31] The seven Sacraments of the Law of grace, affirms in his turn St. Bonaventure, have for author Christ the mediator and lawgiver of the New Covenant.[32] It was in virtue of His sovereign power that He made them efficacious and salutary.

At the moment when the dogma of the Divine institution of the seven Sacraments was explicitly affirmed and studied by theologians, the plan of worship which Jesus had but incompletely made known to His Apostles appeared in all its beauty. Jesus had wished, by the institution of the Sacraments, to sanctify the prin-

[29] Alex. of Hales, *Summa Theol.*, iv, qu. 5, memb. 2, art. 1, St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, etc.

[30] *Summa Theol.*, 3, qu. 64, art. 2: Virtus sacramenti est a solo Deo. Ergo solus Deus potest instituere sacramentum.

[31] *Ibid.*, art. 3.

[32] *Breviloq.*, par. 6. c. 4: Septem sacramenta legis gratiae Christus instituit tanquam Novi Testamenti mediator et praecipuus lator legis.

cipal epochs of the Christian life, its beginning, its successive growth and its end here below. He wished also to provide for the needs of the government of His Church. The intentions of Jesus relative to the Sacraments are only imperfectly revealed in the inspired writings; it is the development of dogma which has given us an integral knowledge of them in the course of centuries. At the end of their development, they shine forth in all their brilliancy, and we are assured, by the infallibility of the Church, that the idea given of them by tradition is in perfect accord with reality.

b. The Manner of the Divine Institution of the Sacraments.

If all the writers of the 13th. century, starting from the dogma of the sacramental efficacy, affirmed the divine institution of the seven Sacraments, all did not certainly have the same idea as to the manner of this institution. The cause of the divergencies of views which were given forth is due to the insufficiency of the Gospel records. How could Christ be the institutor of the seven Sacraments when we read nowhere in the Sacred Writings that He explained Himself on all of them? Two schools were formed, the Franciscan school and the Thomist.[33]

Alexander of Hales, when speaking of the institution of the Sacraments in general, declares that all the Sacraments have Christ for their author, but all were not instituted by Him immediately. "Omnia (instituit) profecto auctoritative, sed non omnia dispensative."[34] Certain ones, Confirmation and Extreme

[33] Cf. TURMEL, *Hist. de la Théol. Pos.* liv. ii, p. i, ch. x.

[34] *Sum. theol.*, IV, qu. 5, membr. 2, art. 1: Sacramenta N. L. digniora sunt sacramentis veteris legis, in quantum hujusmodi

Unction in particular, were established by the Apostles in virtue of the power which they had received from Christ. This doctrine does not substantially differ from the modern theory of the mediate institution:

"Haec duo sacramenta [confirm. et extr. unc.] . . . data sunt dispensatione apostolorum, qui tamen quantum ad potestatem quam acceperunt a Christo majoris erant dignitatis quam ille qui erat in lege [mosaica]." [35]

But when Alexander treats of Confirmation further on in his *Summa,* he adopts an opinion altogether different. Absolutely convinced that the matter and form of the Sacraments are unchangeable, and that they must have been determined by the institutor of the Sacraments, just as they were in the 13th. century, he was led to say that Confirmation was instituted under a special inspiration of the Holy Ghost in a council of Meaux in the 9th. century. Previously the Holy Ghost had been given to the faithful without the medium of any sacramental rite.[36]

This conception of the origin of Confirmation rests on a doctrine which is very true, but of which Alexander made an excessive use, viz., the ever present action of the Holy Spirit in the Church. This action would have as its purpose not only to give to the Christian society a progressive manifestation of the truth revealed to the Apostles, but also to inspire in it the thought and give to it the power of instituting new Sacraments. A strange theory indeed, which ap-

et per digniorem sunt instituta, scilicet per Christum vel apostolos auctoritate ipsius et doctrina."

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*, qu. 9, mem. 1, 2.

pears for the first time in the *Summa* of the Irrefragable Doctor![37]

St. Bonaventure followed the teaching of Alexander, but with some slight modification. According to the teaching of the Seraphic Doctor, the essential matter and form of Confirmation were instituted by the Holy Ghost, but only shortly after the death of the Apostles.

"Sed postquam bases Ecclesiae Apostoli, scilicet qui a Deo non per homines erant ordinati praelati et confirmati defecerunt, instituit Spiritus Sanctus hujus sacramenti formam, cui etiam virtutem sanctificandi dedit."[38]

Extreme Unction, according to St. Bonaventure, would have an analogous origin: the Holy Ghost would have instituted it by the mediation of the Apostles: St. James would be the promulgator of the institution. If Extreme Unction was really the work of Christ, the Gospels would have mentioned it. Now they are silent on this subject, for the institution of Extreme Unction can no more be found in the command of the Savior to His Apostles to heal the sick of Galilee by anointing them with oil, than can that of Confirmation be discovered in the fact that Jesus laid hands on children during His mortal life. It must

[37] It is the institution of the sacrament itself and not only of its matter and form which is attributed to the Holy Ghost. For then they did not consider that, to be the institutor of a sacrament, it sufficed to determine its spiritual effect without also choosing the rite.

[38] *IV Sent.*, Dist. 7, art. 1, qu. 1.—*Ibid.*, qu. 2: Postea successoribus [apostolorum] institutis dandus erat [Spiritus S.] vi verborum et invisibiliter: ideo oportuit institui sensibile elementum. Institutum est ergo hoc elementum [chrisma] Spiritu Sancto dictante ab ipsis Ecclesiae rectoribus.

then be the Holy Ghost who instituted Extreme Unction through the medium of the Apostles.[39]

The great representatives of the Franciscan school of the 13th. century, then, admitted that two Sacraments, Confirmation and Extreme Unction, had for their author not Christ, but the Holy Ghost, that they were Divine institutions, but not institutions of Christ. Still the opinion of St. Bonaventure seems to have varied. According to the *Breviloquium,*[40] as has already been said, all the Sacraments were instituted by Christ, only in different manners. This doctrine is also that of the *Commentary on the Sentences.*[41]

[39] *IV Sent.,* Dist. 23, art. 1, qu. 2.—"Concedendae igitur sunt rationes probantes Spiritum Sanctum per Apostolos hoc sacramentum (extr. unct.) instituisse."

[40] Pars 6, cap. iv: Instituit autem [Christus] praedicta sacramenta diversimode. Quaedam scilicet ex eis confirmando, approbando et consummando, ut matrimonium et paenitentiam: quaedam autem insinuando et initiando, ut confirmationem et unctionem extremam: quaedam vero initiando et consummando et in semetipso suscipiendo, ut sacramentum baptismi, eucharistiae et ordinis. Haec enim tria et plene instituit et etiam primus suscepit.

[41] Fr. A. Vander Heeren, reviewing my book in the *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique de Louvain* (Oct. 15, 1907, pp. 798–802), pretends that this "apparent contradiction" of Alexander of Hales and of St. Bonaventure, who teach on the one hand that all the Sacraments were instituted by Christ, although in different ways, and on the other, that Confirmation and Extreme Unction were instituted by the Holy Ghost, can be explained by the hypothesis of the immediate institution *in genere.* Thus the institution of the rite alone would be attributed to the Holy Ghost, the effect of the sacrament having already been determined by Christ. Consequently, between the opinions of the Franciscans and the modern theory of immediate but generic institution there would be only "a difference of clearness and terminology" (p. 801).—I cannot accept the explanation proposed by Fr. V. Heeren. It tends to interpret ancient writers by a modern theory—a dangerous procedure. Besides it does not square with the texts. St. Bonaventure says that Jesus

The Thomist school always taught that all the Sacraments were instituted by Christ. The silence of Scripture on the establishment of some of them is explained by the fact that not all that Jesus said is contained in the inspired writings. Albert the Great declared that Christ instituted Confirmation as to its actual matter and form; that the Apostles used determined words and matter as we do in giving the Holy Ghost; that besides the Areopagite, then considered as a contemporary of the Apostolic age, mentioned the use of chrism.[42] Extreme Unction likewise had Christ as its author, to which the text of St. Mark [43] is an indirect witness:

"Marci enim (VI) legitur, quod Apostolis euntibus a Domino missis ad praedicandum, multos infirmos ungebant oleo, et curabantur: et non est praesumendum, quod aliquid fecerint nisi ex institutione et imperio Domini." [44]

This teaching is surely exaggerated. St. Thomas tried to bring it nearer the truth. It was really Jesus, he declares, who instituted Confirmation, for the institution of a sacrament is an attribution of a superior power which belongs to Christ alone. But Jesus instituted Confirmation in *promising* the Holy Ghost,

instituted Confirmation and Extreme Unction "insinuando et initiando" (*Brevil.*, vi, 4). He says nowhere that we should understand these formulas as meaning the determination of the spiritual effects of these Sacraments by Christ. Besides, when speaking of Extreme Unction St. Bonaventure gives us to understand the contrary. He says that this sacrament is "insinuated" in Mark (vi, 13) because the anointings of the Apostles produced no spiritual effect. *IV Sent.*, D. 23, A. 1, q. 2, *in fine.*

[42] *IV Sent.*, Dist. 7, art. 2.

[43] vi, 13.

[44] *Ibid.*, Dist. 23, art. 13.

which was to be given only after the Ascension. As to chrism, the matter of the sacrament, its choice was suggested to the Apostles by the tongues of fire, under the form of which the Holy Ghost came down upon them visibly on the day of Pentecost, for oil is really the fuel of fire.[45] The Angelic Doctor gives us to understand that the Savior entrusted the Apostles, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost, with determining the sacramental rite of Confirmation.[46]

As to Extreme Unction, it also was instituted by Christ Himself, and promulgated by His Apostles. This institution is not related by the Evangelists. Still St. Mark mentions the anointings made on the sick of Galilee.[47] St. Thomas sees some relation between these anointings and our sacrament, but he does not indicate it with precision.

The teaching of the Thomist school, which assigns to Christ Himself the institution of all the Sacraments soon became general, while that of Alexander and St. Bonaventure, making the Holy Ghost the author of Confirmation and Extreme Unction, was abandoned or very much modified.[48] Instead of saying that it was the Holy Ghost who inspired the Apostles to institute these two Sacraments, it was said that Christ Himself had ordered it. Confirmation and Extreme Unc-

[45] St. Thomas says further on (*72*, art. 4) that the Apostles in administering Confirmation used a matter and form "ex mandato Christi." But that command of Christ would concern rather the necessity of a matter and form than the determination thereof.

[46] *Summa Theol.*, 3, *72*, art. 1 and *2*.

[47] *IV Sent.*, Dist. *23*, qu. 1, art. 1. *Summa Theol.*, suppl., *29*, art. *3*.

[48] Duns Scotus is nevertheless favorable to the opinion of St. Bonaventure as to the origin of Confirmation. *In IV Sent.*, Dist. *7*, qu. 1.

tion would have thus been instituted mediately. It is this point of view which later theologians, particularly those contemporary with the Council of Trent, will attribute to St. Bonaventure and his disciples. St. Thomas and his school resolutely maintained the immediate institution of all the Sacraments: Christ Himself instituted all the Sacraments, although He Himself did not promulgate all of them; Confirmation and Extreme Unction were promulgated by His Apostles.

The Angelic Doctor thus exposes these two opinions, which are from this time to hold such a great place in the theology of the Sacraments:

"Circa hoc [institutionem extr. unct.] est duplex opinio. Quidam enim dicunt quod sacramentum istud, et confirmationis, Christus non instituit per se, sed apostolis instituendum dimisit; quia haec duo propter plenitudinem gratiae quae in eis confertur, non potuerunt ante Spiritus Sancti missionem plenissimam institui. . . . Alii dicunt quod omnia sacramenta Christus instituit per seipsum: sed quaedam per seipsum promulgavit, quae sunt majoris difficultatis ad credendum; quaedam autem apostolis promulganda reservavit, sicut extremam unctionem et confirmationem. Et haec opinio pro tanto videtur probabilior quia ad fundamentum legis pertinent, et ideo ad legislatorem pertinet eorum institutio." [49]

The hypothesis of the immediate institution, considered by St. Thomas as more probable than that of the mediate institution, became predominant. In the 14th. century, Durandus of St. Pourçain, so much inclined to break away from the common teachings, accepts this unhesitatingly. It was regarded as almost of faith at the time of the Council of Trent, so

[49] *Summa Theol.*, suppl., 29, art. 3. Cf. *IV Sent.* ii, 23, qu. 1, art. 1.

much so that several theologians believed that it had been the intention of the Fathers to define it.[50] In reality, as has already been said, the Church kept out of the controversy. She defined that all the Sacraments have Christ for their author; by that she formally disapproved of every theory that attributed to the Holy Ghost the institution of any sacrament. She also adopted and consecrated the Thomist teaching on the origin of Extreme Unction, instituted by Jesus and promulgated by St. James.[51] But she did not wish to pronounce on the *manner* of the institution of the Sacraments.

Theologians after the Council of Trent made new efforts to understand better and better the dogma of the Divine institution of the Sacraments. They taught almost unanimously that Christ Himself established them all in person; the hypothesis of the mediate institution never gained many followers in modern times.[52]

But the historical studies of the 17th. century obliged the writers, as we have seen in Chapter II,[53] to limit the action of Christ in the institution of some Sacraments, to determining the spiritual effect, the choice of the rite being left to the Apostles and the Church. Thus arose the hypothesis of the immediate institution *in genere* and *in specie;* which entered the-

[50] Bellarmine, *De sacram. in gen.,* lib. I, cap. 23: Qui canon non debet ita intelligi, quasi concilium velit sacramenta instituta esse a Christo immediate, vel mediate, sed solum immediate: nam alioqui concilium frustra canonem istum posuisset, cum nemo unquam dubitaverit, quin saltem mediate sacramenta a Deo sint instituta. Cf. Vasquez, *In* 3am *Part.,* qu. 64, disp. 135, cap. 1.

[51] *Sess. XIV, de Extrema Unctione,* can. 1.

[52] Cf. De Lugo, *De Sac. in gen.,* Disp. vii, sect. 1.; H. Tournely, *De Sac. in gen.,* qu. 5, art. 1.

[53] See above, pp. 87, ff.

ology definitively from the beginning of the 17th. century. Honoré Tournely (†1729) exposes and discusses it as a doctrine known in the schools.[54]

The hypothesis of the immediate institution *in specie* and *in genere* was a happy result of the efforts of theological thought, striving to solve the problem of the manner of the institution of the Sacraments. Can this result be called definitive? A more complete study of the historical beginnings of many of our Sacraments seems to show that it cannot. The true solution must be sought, if we are not mistaken, in the traditional and fertile idea of development, to which Newman, that great thinker, has so opportunely brought back Catholic theology.

[54] *De Sac.*, qu. 1, art. 4. Cf. Billuart, *De Sac. in comm.*, Dissert. 1, art. 5.

CHAPTER VII

THE INTENTION OF THE MINISTER AND THE RECIPIENT

For the validity of the Sacraments the only condition common to both minister and recipient is the intention of administering, or of receiving the sacramental rite.

The seven Sacraments cannot, it is clear, be administered or received by any and everyone indiscriminately: each sacrament demands special conditions, either on the part of the minister or of the recipient. Thus, while it is true that anyone, even a Pagan, may baptize validly, it is equally true, that priests alone have power to say Mass, to absolve sin, jurisdiction (of course) presupposed, and to administer Extreme Unction to the sick. Likewise in the Latin Church, Confirmation is reserved to bishops; although among the Greeks it is commonly enough conferred by ordinary priests. As for the conferring of Holy Orders, it is exclusively the function of the bishop. Only bishops can validly ordain the higher ministers of the Church.

As with the minister, so also with the recipient: the conditions demanded of him are not the same for all Sacraments. Thus, whereas Baptism can be validly conferred on any living person without exception, because it is necessary to salvation, the other Sacraments can be validly conferred on those only who are already

baptized: it is the baptismal character that renders their reception possible. But still, not every baptized person is a fit subject for all the Sacraments: those who have never enjoyed the use of reason, and, consequently could never sin, cannot be absolved at the tribunal of Penance, nor be anointed with the oil of the sick, because these two Sacraments presuppose the possibility of sin. Nor can Marriage be contracted by those not of age, or who lack those qualities essential to the purpose or end of the sacrament, or lastly, by those who have been disqualified by the Church legislation, such as clerics in Major Orders and religious under solemn vows. Only those who are in serious danger ought to receive Extreme Unction; and men only can receive the sacrament of Orders.

The intention is then the sole condition for the validity [1] that is common to both minister and subject of all the Sacraments; as we know, neither faith, nor the state of grace, is necessary.

§ I. *Doctrine of the Church.*

The doctrine of the Church relative to the minister's intention was defined also in condemnation of Protestant errors — hence, an understanding of these errors will furnish also a correct idea of the true doctrine of the Church.

It was but the logical consequence of the sacramental principles of the Reformation to discard the

[1] It is not to our purpose to speak here of the conditions requisite in the minister, that the administration of the sacrament be licit, nor of the dispositions demanded of the recipient for the profitable reception of the sacrament: this latter belongs rather to Moral Theology.

necessity of any intention whatsoever in the minister, with reference to the conferring of the sacrament. If all the efficacy of the Sacraments comes from the faith of the subject, and if the sacramental rite has no other purpose than to excite the faith by recalling the Divine promise, it is readily seen that the end may be attained independently of all intention on the part of the minister: "All we believe we receive," Luther said, "that we do actually receive, regardless of what the minister does or does not do, even though he act through dissimulation or in open mockery." [2] "The penitent who believes that he is really absolved is certainly absolved, even though the priest pronounce the words solely for amusement's sake." [3]

The ministerial act of the priest has then no share in the production of the sacramental effects; for this reason, Luther added, all Christians without distinction have equal power either to teach the word of God or to confer the Sacraments; there is no difference, from this point of view, between priest and layman.[4]

The Church on the contrary attributes to the sacramental rite an intrinsic power, an objective efficacy; the administration of the sacrament is an act of Christ, who is represented by the minister. Since therefore he is Christ's representative and acts in His name, and since he makes use of power coming from Christ, the

[2] It was this proposition of Luther's that was submitted to the examination of the Council of Trent. THEINER, I, 384; PALLAVICINI, Book IX, chap. vi, n. 3.

[3] Twelfth proposition of Luther's condemned by Leo X. DENZING., n. 636 (new edit., n. 752).

[4] Omnes christiani habent eamdem potestatem in verbo et sacramento quocumque, et claves ecclesiae omnibus sunt communes: Luther's words proposed at the Council of Trent for examination. THEINER, i, 384.

minister of the sacrament should accordingly conform his will to the will of Him whose place he holds; otherwise his transactions are not valid: proxy does not act validly in the name of his principal, unless he conforms to the latter's intentions.

For this reason the Council of Trent defined that intention in the minister of the Sacraments is necessary: that is, the will to do what the Church does.[5] To will to do what the Church does in the administration of the Sacraments is to will what Christ willed; for the Church's intentions are Christ's intentions regarding the Sacraments.

This intention may be had sufficiently even in the case of one who would not recognize the Church of Rome to be the true Church, as for example, the Protestants; or even in the case of one who, like the Pagans, would be totally ignorant of the Church's existence; it suffices that he wills to do what Christians do — he thereby intends to will what Christ willed. Hence it is that a heretic, a profligate, a Pagan, wishing to baptize, may have implicitly this intention of doing what the Church does. Moreover often it is necessary in order that the minister be actually the representative of Jesus, that he be invested with the sacerdotal character. The ordinary Christian has not the power to administer all the Sacraments[6] as Luther falsely asserted.

Such is the doctrine of the Council of Trent as interpreted by Cardinal Bellarmine.[7] The different

[5] *Sess. VII, De sacram. in gen.*, can. 11: Si quis dixerit, in ministris dum sacramenta conficiunt et conferunt, non requiri intentionem saltem faciendi quod facit Ecclesia; A. S.— Cf. *Sess. XIV*, can. 9, et cap. vi.

[6] *Sess. VII, De sacram. in gen.*, can. 10.

[7] *De Sacr. in gen.*, Lib. II, cap. 27.

qualities which the intention of the minister of the Sacraments should have, will be explained in the historical sketch which is to follow. Let it suffice to note here (as Pallavicini expressly declares [8]) that the Council did not define that the intention of doing what the Church does should be *internal* in the sense given the word by theologians. The famous controversy to be given at length further on, is not therefore irrevocably closed.

According to the unanimous teaching of theologians which, although not expressly sanctioned by the Church, must be followed in practice, the intention of receiving the sacred rite is required in every adult who has the use of reason and comes to the sacrament. The reception of the sacrament must fulfil the conditions of a human act, that is, must in some manner proceed from consciousness and free will. The degree of consciousness, as will be explained later, varies according to the nature of the sacrament. It is obvious that the sick or the dying whom the priest attends cannot be asked to have as perfect an intention as is required of those who receive Holy Orders or Matrimony, and thereby contract serious obligations for life.

The dogma of the necessity of intention developed on parallel lines with the other sacramentary dogmas: and although the Church had not from the very beginning an explicit theory on the intention, it may readily be shown that she at all times practised what that theory expresses. Once again we see that dogma is an expression of the traditional practice of the Church and that anyone who will seek out the traces

[8] *Hist. du concile de Tr.*, liv. IX, chap. vi, n. 2.

of her sacramentary dogmas in the life of Christian society, must feel his faith grow stronger and deeper.

In the early centuries, the doctrine of the intention was tacitly implied in the teaching of the Fathers regarding the ministerial action of bishop or priest, when conferring the Sacraments; bishops or priests were considered the representatives of Christ and His Church; their intentions therefore were to accomplish what Christ ordained. St. Augustine was the first to sketch the outlines of a theory about the intention of the minister and of the recipient of Baptism; it is not to be wondered at that the holy Doctor did not come to a definitive result. He did at least lay down with precision the principles upon which Hugh of St. Victor, William of Auxerre, Alexander of Hales and St. Thomas formulated the complete dogma later on.

§ II. *From the Beginning up to St. Augustine, the Minister of the Sacrament is considered as the Representative of Christ or His Church — The Ordinations imposed by force in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries.*

St. Paul declares to the Corinthians that the preachers of the Gospel are to be regarded "as the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God," [9] and as fulfilling "the functions of ambassadors of Christ" in "the ministry of reconciliation" of men with God.[10] This dignity of representatives of Jesus, which the Apostles attribute to themselves, when they preach the Gospel, belongs to them likewise when they celebrate the Christian rites.

[9] *I Cor.*, iv, 1.
[10] *II Cor.*, v, 18–20.

The Apostles, with the faithful of the primitive Church, whenever they partook of the Eucharist, had formally the intention of repeating what the Savior had done and commanded to be done, at the Last Supper: "Hoc facite in meam commemorationem." Hence it is that whenever they came together for the Eucharistic Banquet, it is "the Lord's Supper" that they intended to celebrate.[11] It was likewise in memory of Christ, and out of conformity to His express will, that the Apostles baptized and instructed others to baptize in the name of Jesus. It was also in the name of Jesus that the anointings with oil were made on the sick by the presbyters of the churches.[12] When the Apostles laid hands on the newly baptized, to confer on them the Holy Ghost, it was because Jesus had promised the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, to all who should believe his doctrine. When St. Paul orders the Corinthians to expel from their meetings the incestuous Christian, he claims to be using a power which he has from Jesus Christ, and to be acting in His name.[13]

The Apostles then consider themselves and wish to be considered by the Christians as the representatives of Jesus, and the executors of His will.

The intention of carrying out the will of Christ, in the administration and reception of Baptism and the Eucharist is clearly indicated in the 2nd. century, in St. Justin's writings. "In the name of God, the Father and Master of all things, and of Jesus Christ our Savior, and of the Holy Spirit, they (i.e. the adherents of Christianity) are then washed in the water.

[11] *I Cor.*, xi, 20, 24.
[12] *James*, v, 14.
[13] *I Cor.*, v, 4–5; *II Cor.*, x, 8.

For Christ has said: 'Unless you be born again, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.' [14] So, too, the Christians partaking of the Eucharist believe that it is the Body and Blood of Jesus Incarnate, because, according to the teaching of the Apostles, Jesus had said 'Do this in memory of Me; this is my Body . . . this is My Blood.'" [15] The writers in the following centuries express themselves in the same manner as St. Justin, when they treat of Baptism and the Eucharist.[16]

This intention on the part of the Church of acting in conformity to the will of Jesus evidences itself particularly at the moment where the development of the sacramentary system brings a Christian rite into bold prominence. At the opening of the 3rd. century, when the rigorists were contesting the power of Pope Callistus to remit sins of the flesh, he declared that he held from Christ, through the medium of St. Peter, the power to bind and to loose.[17] He thereby manifested his intention of using that power in the name of Him who had given it. St. Ignatius of Antioch at the beginning of the 2nd. century, in like manner lets us understand that bishops, priests, and deacons are established in the Church in conformity to the will of Christ.[18] The intention of carrying out the orders of Jesus is, besides, necessarily contained in the celebration of a rite of which He is declared the author;

[14] *I Apol.*, 61.

[15] *I Apol.*, 66.

[16] Cf. St. Cyprian, *Epist.* lxiii, 14: Si in sacrificio quod Christus obtulit non nisi Christus sequendus est, utique id nos obaudire et facere oportet quod Christus fecit et quod faciendum esse mandavit.

[17] Tertullian, *De pudicitia*, 21.

[18] *Philad.*, inscr.

the minister considers himself then as holding the place of Christ in the liturgical function, as doing what He did Himself or ordered to be done.

Besides, the minister of the sacrament is Christ's representative not only by his intention, but likewise because he has been officially constituted in the Church to perform the ceremonies of Christian worship. Liturgical and sacramentary functions in the Christian worship have, in fact, always been reserved to special persons truly set apart from the ordinary faithful by a particular consecration. These persons were the *episcopoi* or presbyters and the deacons, in the Apostolic age. After the hierarchical organization of the churches had been fully established, each having at its head a sovereign Bishop, under whose authority labored a number of priests and deacons, the administration of Baptism, the celebration of the Eucharist, and the reconciliation of penitents became functions of the bishop;[19] ordinary priests could, however, fulfil them in the bishop's absence, or when delegated by him. There was, before the erection of rural parishes in the 4th. century — and this fact explains the above discipline — a bishop at the head of every church. It was therefore no more than natural that he should be the one to preside at liturgical functions, just as our pastors to-day preside at all ceremonies of any importance that occur in their churches. The creation in country places of parishes entrusted to ordinary priests put an end to this episcopal reservation.

Power over the Sacraments was thus always considered as residing in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The Montanist heresy tried to make it the prerogative of

[19] Cf. St. Ignatius, *Smyrn.*, viii; Tertullian, *De Bapt.*, 17; *De pudicit.*, 18.

spiritual men; the confessors and martyrs of Carthage, in the days of St. Cyprian, claimed to have power, independently of the bishop, to reconcile the *lapsi* to the Church, but they had to yield before the strenuous opposition of the Church.[20] The Gnostic sects alone allowed the laity and even women to celebrate the sacramental rites.[21] But such practices were strongly condemned as heretical alterations of the official usage of the Church.[22] Firmilian, Bishop of Cæsarea, tells with indignation of a false prophetess, who baptized, celebrated the Eucharist, and seduced many of the faithful in Cappadocia, about the middle of the 3rd. century.[23]

In the 4th. century this idea that the minister of the sacrament is a personage specially consecrated to hold the place of Christ, evolved into a magnificent doctrine on the Christian Priesthood, of which the loftiest expression is found in the writings of St. John Chrysostom,[24] especially in his treatise on *The Priesthood.*

This doctrine of the priesthood was brought into close relation to ecclesiology during the Donatist controversy. The minister of the sacrament, who was

[20] See VACANDARD, *Revue du Clergé Fr.*, 1905, pp. 236–260.

[21] SR. EPIPHANIUS, *Haer.* xlix, 3; ST. IRENÆUS, *Adv. Haer.*, i, 9.

[22] Cf. TERTULLIAN, *De virg. velandis*, 9; *De bapt.*, 17.

[23] *Epist.* lxxv, 10 (*Cypriani opp.*, HARTEL, ii, 817–818). Cf. TILLEMONT, *Mémoires*, t. iv, art. on Saint Firmilian.

[24] *In prodit. Judae hom.* 1, 6: It is not a man in fact that causes the oblations to become the Body and Blood of Christ; it is Christ Himself, who was crucified for us. The priest is there to represent Him and pronounce the words. In reality it is the power and the grace of God that operate. Cf. *In Matt. hom.* lxxxii, 5. Beautiful considerations on the grandeurs of the priesthood, and on the perfection of the virtues demanded in that state, are deduced from this doctrine in the treatise *On the Priesthood*, iii, 4, 5, 6; vi, 4.

considered Christ's representative, was consequently regarded as the representative of the Church, because the Church is Jesus Christ. St. Cyprian, in declaring void the baptism conferred by an heretical minister, had brought up the question of the relations between the minister of the sacrament and the Church, and had given to it a wrong solution. St. Augustine, preëminently the doctor on ecclesiology, was brought, through his conflicts against the Donatists, to state these relations with great precision.

The minister of the sacrament is, by his indestructible character, the representative of the Church everywhere; hence, Baptism conferred by him is always valid, as well in heresy or schism as in Catholic unity. And since there is between Christ and His Church [25] a moral identity, the conferring of a sacrament is an act of Christ, working through his Church, as represented in the minister.

The minister of the sacrament is thus the representative of the Church as well as of Christ. Mediæval theologians will conclude from this that he must have an intention, the will to conform to the intentions of the Church. St. Augustine did not think of deducing this conclusion, but in practice he lived it, he and all of the bishops of the Patristic period. The dogma of the necessity of the intention in the minister did therefore, actually exist, although as a life more than as a theory.

[25] *Enar.* 2 in psalm. 30, n. 4: Fit ergo tanquam ex duobus una quaedam persona, ex capite et corpore, ex sponso et sponsa. . . . Si duo in carne una, cur non duo in voce una? Loquatur ergo Christus, quia in Christo loquitur Ecclesia, et in Ecclesia loquitur Christus. Cf. *Sermo* cxxxvii, 1.

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The same must be said of the intention required in the recipient of the sacrament. Even as bishops and priests in the performance of the sacramental rites, considered themselves as representatives and ambassadors of Jesus, so too the faithful received the Sacraments with the intention of obeying Christ, of sharing in the sacred rites of the Church, and of thus obtaining salvation. It is from these intimate dispositions of the faithful that the theology on the intention of the recipient of the Sacraments will be deduced later on.

Against this view several cases of ordinations by violence might be adduced. Everyone knows what repugnance the Saints have ever manifested as regards the burden of the episcopacy. Many a time recourse to ruse, deception and even violence was needed to force them to submit to imposition of hands. Cornelius, according to St. Cyprian[26] "vim passus est ut episcopatum coactus exciperet."

It was thanks to the stratagem of St. John Chrysostom that his friend St. Basil, allowed himself to be ordained bishop.[27]

In the 4th. and 5th. centuries, when laymen had a share in the sacerdotal and episcopal elections, no small number of holy persons were constrained, often by popular riots, to suffer themselves to be made priests or bishops. St. Gregory Nazianzen received his priestly ordination under such circumstances, and was

[26] *Epist.* lv, 8.

[27] St. John Chrysostom let St. Basil believe he himself was receiving the Episcopacy at the same time as Basil. *De Sacerdotio*, i, 6–7; cf. Tillemont, *Mémoires*, t. xi, art. 5.

so deeply grieved thereby that he fled into solitude; "nor could considerations of either country or friends or relatives, or father or mother keep him back." [28] He returned to Nazianzus, however, to exercise there his priestly duties, "for fear of falling into the crime and incurring the punishment of the disobedient."

St. Augustine in like manner dreaded the priesthood; he carefully avoided the towns where there was no bishop, for fear that he would be raised to the episcopate in spite of himself. One day he came to Hippo, "without the least apprehension, for Hippo had a bishop, the venerable and saintly Valerius. But it happened, that a priest was needed, a fact of which St. Augustine was unaware. The congregation being assembled, the Saint came to the Church without suspecting anything. The people already knew of his virtues and his doctrine, and they loved him because they had heard how he had abandoned his property to consecrate himself to God. When, therefore, Valerius in his sermon spoke of his need of ordaining some one to the priesthood, the people took hold of Augustine and, according to the custom, presented him to the Bishop for ordination: unanimously, with loud cries and passionate ardor they all insisted on it. And as for him, he burst into tears at the thought of the dangers of the priesthood, and all the difficulties and trials to which the government of a church would expose him." [29]

Two years later, in 393, St. Paulinus, the future

[28] TILLEMONT, *Mémoires*, t. ix, art. 19, 20.

[29] TILLEMONT, *Mémoires*, t. xiii, art. 59. See art. 191, 192, on the strange uprising that broke out in 411 at Hippo because a holy man, Pinian, husband of St. Melania the younger, resolutely refused to be made a priest.

Bishop of Nola, was ordained priest in the same way despite himself, in the church of Barcelona. Whilst he was praying, the multitude seized him by the throat [30] and forced him to allow himself to be ordained. "And thus, although desiring not to drink that chalice, yet realizing that Jesus Christ Himself had said He had come to minister, not to be ministered unto, he was forced to say to God: Thy will, not mine, be done."

We need not multiply examples.[31] At first sight we might be tempted to suppose that these holy men, of whom we have just spoken, were ordained entirely against their will, and consequently, without sufficient intention. But on a closer examination of the facts we perceive that after a moment of strong resistance, the candidates so constrained at last consented to their ordination. St. Augustine adds that these violent proceedings were meant to induce those who were worthy, to accept wilfully the burden of the episcopate.[32] Finally, what clearly proves that these saintly men were not ordained wholly against their will is that after ordination they fulfilled the duties of their Orders. We may very well compare them to the holy priests of the Middle Ages or of modern times, who have been forced by Sovereign Pontiffs, under pain of censure, to accept the episcopal office.

[30] Vi multitudinis strangulantis correptus est. SANCTI PAULINI *Epist.* i, 10; ii, 2; iii, 4. Cf. TILLEMONT, t. xiv, art. 13, on St. Paulinus.

[31] Several examples are given in HALLIER, *De sacris electionibus et ordinationibus,* part. 1, sect. v, cap. 1 (MIGNE, *Cursus Theol.,* t. xxiv, 408 ff), and MANY, *De sacra ordinatione,* p. 594.

[32] *Epist.* clxxii, *ad Donatum,* n. 2: Multi, ut episcopatum suscipiant, tenentur inviti, perducuntur, includuntur, custodiuntur, patiuntur tanta quae nolunt, donec eis adsit voluntas suscipiendi operis boni.

History does, however, mention cases of violence that are to be regretted thoroughly — cases in which the validity of the ordinations may have been compromised. Here are two which we quote from Tillemont.

The monks of a monastery in Bethlehem complained to St. Epiphanius, about the year 394, of having no priest with them to celebrate the Sacraments, and they urgently asked that Paulinian, St. Jerome's brother, might be ordained for the purpose. Paulinian on the other hand terribly dreaded a charge as heavy as that of the priesthood. But one day when St. Epiphanius was celebrating the Holy Mysteries in the church of a city near his monastery, he had Paulinian seized by the deacons when he least expected it, and ordered him to be gagged to prevent him from speaking, lest he conjure him by the name of Jesus Christ not to ordain him. And in this way he ordained him first deacon — and obliged him through fear of God and by the authority of the Scriptures, to serve at the altar; Paulinian had no small difficulty in accepting, and protested unceasingly that he was unworthy of this honor. Then as he was performing the duties of deacon and ministering at the sacrifice, Epiphanius ordained him priest, but with the same difficulty, always keeping Paulinian's mouth sealed; and he forced him by the same reason to take his seat among the priests." [33] The way Epiphanius proceeded proves that, as regards the necessary intention in the recipient of the Sacraments, the holy Bishop had no very definite ideas!

[33] Tillemont, *Mémoires,* t. xii, art. 68. S. Epiphanius himself relates this fact in a letter to John of Jerusalem. (*Epist.* l, inter epist. S. Hieronymi), *P.L.,* xxii, 518.

The case of Bassian, Bishop of Evazes, a town in the province of Asia, which occurred in 448, is even more extraordinary. Bassian "claims that he had consecrated his youth to the service of the poor, that he had built a hospital for them, where he had placed seventy beds and where he received the sick and wounded; that, whereas he was loved by everybody, Memnon of Ephesus was jealous of him, and did all in his power to drive Bassian from the city; and that it was with this end in view that he even imposed hands on him to make him bishop of Evazes, a city of the province of Asia. It was after the Council of Ephesus, at which Eutropius, Bishop of Evazes, assisted. Bassian declared that Memnon held him at the altar from nine o'clock till noon, without securing his consent to the ordination, and that even blood was shed on the altar and on the Holy Gospel.[34] He protests that after this ordination he was never again in Evazes and never saw it; but that Basil, Memnon's successor, having assembled the Council of his province and learned how the affair had come about, had discharged him from the church of Evazes, putting another bishop in his place, and had given him nevertheless communion and the rank of a bishop." [35] Bassian then became, but irregularly, Bishop of Ephesus. He was indeed a personage of doubtful conduct.

According to our appreciation of the conditions for the validity of the Sacraments, if the story of Bassian is exact, his ordination was certainly not valid. It is

[34] Ego autem non acquiescebam, sed ab hora tertia usque ad sextam coram altari me plagis afflixit [Memnon], et sanctum evangelium et altare sanguine est impletum. *Oratio* Bassiani, habita in concilio Chalcedonensi, act. xi (Mansi, t. vii, col. 278).

[35] TILLEMONT, t. xv, art. 22, on St. Leo, Pope.

then very probable that in some cases the ordinations were null through lack of sufficient intention in the subject. But we cannot hold Catholic tradition and the official usage of the Church responsible for these irregularities, caused as they were by excesses of zeal or other less reputable passions.

§ III. *The First Speculations on the Intention of the Minister and that of the Recipient of the Sacrament — St. Augustine.*

The lengthy and serious controversies on the efficacy of Baptism that St. Augustine had to sustain against the Donatists were bound to bring him to treat expressly the question of intention, for the doctrines on the Sacraments are all bound up with that of efficacy: according as this latter was enriched in the course of centuries with more precision, the others benefited likewise.

St. Augustine therefore at the end of his treatise on *"Baptism against the Donatists,"* sums up his thoughts on the conditions requisite in minister and in subject for the validity of the sacrament and its utility for salvation.

He divides the ministers of Baptism into three classes, according to their more or less intimate connection with the Church. First of all there are the holy ministers, the true servants of God, who are scattered throughout the world, but united by common bond in the same communion of the Sacraments; they belong to the Church corporally and spiritually; they make up the Church as the framework of a house makes up the house. "Sic sunt in domo Dei, ut ipsi sint domus Dei" There are other ministers who are

only corporally in the Church, because their lives are not holy: they are as vessels of ignominy in the Church, just as straw mixed in with the wheat. Others, again, are separated from the Church both spiritually and corporally: these are heretics and schismatics.[36]

The Baptism given by either of the first two of these classes is both valid and fruitful, except when given to catechumens who are badly disposed and unworthy to receive remission of their sins. As for Baptism conferred by heretics and schismatics, it is always valid, but persons thus baptized receive the grace only in case they are in good faith and in danger of death. In other circumstances their Baptism profits them only when they enter the Catholic unity.[37]

The investigation into these different conditions in which the minister and the subject of Baptism may be placed, led St. Augustine to ask himself what he should think of a Baptism conferred in conditions even more extraordinary. What, for example, would be the value of Baptism conferred by an unbaptized person? During the Patristic age, especially in the West, it was readily admitted that a baptized layman could confer Baptism;[38] but nobody had thus far brought up the question as to whether or not a mere catechumen or a Pagan, who through curiosity had learned how to baptize, could confer the sacrament validly. Whence arose the question that St. Augustine proposed to himself, for the solution of which,— and of several

[36] *De Bapt. contra Donat.*, vii, 99.
[37] *Ibid.*, 100.
[38] Tertullian, *De bapt.*, 17; St. Augustine, *Cont. epist. Parm.*, ii, 29.

others,— he desired the decision of a Council.[39]

Those other questions proposed by the holy Doctor were about the intention of the minister and of the subject of the sacrament. They refer to two cases of simulated Baptism: the fallacious administration of Baptism (either where the subject alone acts "fallaciously," or where he acts in concert with the minister) performed either in the Catholic Church or in an heretical sect, supposed in good faith to be the true Church; and Baptism conferred for the mere purpose of amusement, just as children do who mimic in their play the ceremonies of Baptism, or actors who reproduce them on the stage.[40]

In the solutions given St. Augustine is somewhat hesitating; in some even he is altogether undecided. Indeed is it not risky to propose solutions in matters so delicate, which previous writers have not treated, nor councils yet studied? If the Bishop of Hippo had to discuss them now in a Council, he hardly could tell what opinion he would adopt. He is wanting in the assurance which comes, under Christ's direction, from the universal consent of the Church.[41] The doctrine of the intention truly was still in the embryonic state.

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It is difficult to determine exactly what St. Augus-

[39] In the early Middle Ages all doubts as to the validity of Baptism conferred by unbaptized persons ceased. Cf. DENZINGER, *Enchirid.*, n. 264 (new edit., n. 335).

[40] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, vii, 101.

[41] *Ibid.*, 102: Nobis tutum est, in ea non progredi aliqua temeritate sententiae, quae nullo in catholico regionali concilio coepta, nullo plenario terminata sunt: id autem fiducia securae vocis asserere, quod in gubernatione Domini Dei nostri et Salvatoris Jesu Christi universalis Ecclesiae consensione roboratum est.

tine understood by this " fallacious " administration of Baptism of which he speaks in the first case of simulation. This " fallacious " administration, according to the Bishop of Hippo, in no way prevents the Baptism from being valid, when conferred in the Catholic Church or in a sect which was believed to be that Church: " Non dubito etiam illos habere Baptismum, qui quamvis fallaciter id accipiant, in Ecclesia tamen accipiunt, vel ubi putatur esse Ecclesia ab eis." [42] And in fact ancient ecclesiastical decisions (praeteritis majorum statutis) ordered that a Baptism administered in this wise be not repeated — the only action to be taken was to punish the guilty.[43]

Now if this " fallacious " administration is one and the same thing with administration made without serious intention, we must infer that for St. Augustine, no intention was required either in minister or subject of Baptism, when they acted in the Church or what they believed to be the Church. Otherwise it remains to be found out what this " fallacious " administration is.

According to Cardinal Franzelin, St. Augustine would have had in mind by this " fallacious " Baptism not the lack of intention to baptize or be baptized, but the total absence of faith in the subject and in the minister. Baptism is " fallaciously " administered, he says, when the subject, prompted by fear of punishments or by allurements of temporal advantage, pretends to be converted to Christianity, and is baptized without having faith, thus deceiving the Church.

[42] *Id.*

[43] *Ibid.*, 101: Si postea prodatur, nemo repetit, sed aut excommunicando punitur illa simulatio, aut paenitendo sanatur.

Whenever the minister of the Baptism is unaware of this fraud, the deception exists only on the part of the subject; when, on the other hand, he does know of it, and yet does not hesitate to administer the sacrament, he in his turn deceives the Church. Insincere conversions from selfish motives would have been relatively frequent in Africa at this period, when Christianity with its official recognition from Constantine was supplanting more and more the Pagan religions.[44]

St. Augustine then understood by this " fallacious " administration of Baptism that which occurs when the subject and the minister have not faith. He would not have in mind at all to speak of the intention required. This total absence of faith does not affect the validity of the Baptism, which, as the ancient ecclesiastical decisions declare and as St. Augustine proved to the Donatists, is wholly independent of the faith and the moral worth of minister or subject.[45]

This interpretation of St. Augustine's thought runs counter to several difficulties. In the first place, it is hard to see why St. Augustine after having at great length proven, without the slightest hesitation, that the validity of Baptism does not depend on the faith of minister or of subject, would come back on this point at the end of his treatise *On Baptism against the Donatists.*

[44] *De Sacr. in gen.*, th. xvi, schol. 2: Sine dubio fallaciter agit, qui animum non christianum gerens, ductus tamen timore vel spe temporali simulat, se velle esse christianum, atque ita baptismo se subjicit. Sicut talis fallaciter accipit, ita minister, si esset conscius et fraudi sacrilegae colludens, fallaciter et Ecclesiam fallendo daret.— Cf. Ch. Pesch, *Praelect. dogm.*, t. vi, n. 284.

[45] Franzelin, *Ibid.*

And still harder to understand is the connection set up by St. Augustine between the "fallacious" administration of Baptism which takes place in the Church, and that which is mimicked on the stage. These two administrations constitute in the holy Doctor's mind two cases of *simulation* of Baptism.[46]

For this reason, other authors, more especially theologians who adopt the doctrine of Catharinus, think, — more correctly, too, we believe, — that this "fallacious" administration of Baptism is that which takes place when the minister performs seriously all the sacred rites, and the subject receives them in the same manner, while in their inmost heart their intention is only to act in sham and derision.[47]

This interpretation of St. Augustine's mind is justified by the fact that Baptism "fallaciously" given or received is declared valid, while no solution is offered as regards that represented on the stage. Now between these two baptisms there is this one difference that in the first the ceremonies are performed normally in a religious assembly, and in the second on the other hand, they are ostensibly gone through for the sole

[46] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, vii, 101: Solet etiam quaeri . . . utrum nihil intersit quo animo accipiat [baptisma] ille cui datur, cum simulatione, an sine simulatione: si cum simulatione, utrum fallens, sicut in Ecclesia, vel in ea quae putatur Ecclesia; an jocans, sicut in mimo.

[47] "Ministri fallacis nomine eum intelligit S. Augustinus, qui habet animum simulatum, qui nimirum licet sacramentum serio exterius conferat, suam tamen intus cohibet intentionem, et hac ipsum ridet quod facit. . . . Qui enim in Ecclesia, vel in ea quae putatur Ecclesia fallit, serio ritum omnem vel exercet ipse, vel in se fieri patitur." Drouin, *De Sacramentis in gen.*, qu. 7, cap. iii, 2 (Migne, *Cursus Theol.*, t. xx, 1495). Drouin teaches that the intention to perform seriously the sacramental rite suffices for the validity, even though the minister would not intend, in his inmost soul, to administer the sacrament.

purpose of amusement. But in both cases the intention of really conferring or receiving the sacrament is lacking. For St. Augustine, then, the internal intention of deceiving, of pretending, would not apparently constitute an obstacle to the validity of Baptism.

We must not imagine, however, that St. Augustine foresaw our modern distinction between internal and external intention, or that properly speaking he taught the sufficiency of the latter. The point of view from which he considers the " fallacious " administration of Baptism is entirely different from that of Catharinus. If the holy Doctor declares that Baptism thus conferred is valid, it is because it takes place entirely within the Church, or in a Christian sect supposedly the true Church. Therefore such an administration of Baptism is thereby an act of the Church, although the minister or the subject have in his heart the intention to deceive.

If then that " fallacious " Baptism be an act of the Church, it ought, according to Augustinian principles on the Sacraments, to be certainly valid. Those therefore are truly baptized " qui quamvis fallaciter id accipiant, in ecclesia tamen accipiunt vel ubi putatur esse Ecclesia ab eis, in quorum societate id accipitur, de quibus dictum est, *Ex nobis exierunt*" (*I Joan., ii*, 19).[48] The Baptism imitated on the stage or in the games is, on the contrary, of doubtful validity, because it is conferred outside of a religious assembly, and no one, not even the one thus " baptized " takes the affair as serious; " Ubi autem neque societas ulla esset ita credentium, neque ille qui ibi acciperet, ita crederet, sed totum ludicre et mimice et joculariter ageretur, utrum appro-

[48] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, vii, 102. Cf. *Sermo* lxxi, 37.

bandus esset Baptismus qui sic daretur; divinum judicium . . . implorandum esse censerem." [49]

Whatever interpretation should be given to the obscure ending of the treatise *on Baptism against the Donatists,* other documents prove that in St. Augustine's day, the necessity of an intention in the subject of the sacrament was not a thing unknown. The thirty-fourth canon of the Third Council of Carthage held in 397, prescribes that Baptism be given to the sick who can no longer speak, provided that, according to the testimony of those about them, they have desired it during their life.[50]

St. Augustine also alluded in one of his letters [51] to the intention of receiving the episcopal burden, which he who is ordained despite his repugnance must have.

* * *

As for the second case of simulation which concerns Baptism conferred with the obvious end of amusement or mockery, St. Augustine refused to commit himself on the subject. Were he obliged to give an opinion on the value of such a Baptism, he would have recourse to prayer, and would await the true solution from Divine revelation.[52] "Divinum judicium per

[49] *Id.*

[50] Bruns, *Concilia,* t. i, p. 128. See a like decision in the first Synod of Orange, can. 12 (Hefele, *Hist. of Councils,* vol. III, p. 161).— St. Augustine, it is true, declares that catechumens suddenly deprived of the use of their senses, ought to be baptized even in case they had manifested no desire for Baptism. But he adds that the desire of the catechumen is then to be presumed. "Multo satius est nolenti dare quam volenti negare, ubi velit an nolit sic non apparet, ut tamen credibilius sit eum, si posset, velle se potius dicturum ea sacramenta percipere." *De conjug. adult.,* i, n. 33.

[51] *Epist.* clxxiii, n. 2.

[52] *Id.* Cf., n. 103.

alicujus revelationis oraculum, concordi oratione et impensis supplici devotione gemitibus implorandum esse censerem." The Bishop of Hippo was convinced that God communicates Divine truth by a sort of direct revelation, whenever the doctors of the Church need it and ask it in fervent prayer. It was by a revelation of this kind that he was taught when he wrote towards the year 397 to Simplicianus, Bishop of Milan, that the beginning of faith is a gift of grace; up till then he had thought otherwise.[53] And did not St. Thomas Aquinas himself declare that he learned directly from God through prayer much more than by all his studies?

This hesitation of St. Augustine to decide on the value of Baptism administered for amusement's sake, proves that he knew nothing of the decision which, according to Rufinus (†410), St. Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, had given regarding the Baptism conferred in play by the child Athanasius upon his playmates.[54] If it were true that St. Alexander had considered such a Baptism valid, it would necessarily

[53] *De praedestin.*, n. 8: Cum de hac re aliter saperem; quam mihi Deus in hac quaestione solvenda, cum ad episcopum Simplicianum, sicut dixi, scriberem, revelavit.— Cf. TILLEMONT, *Mémoires*, xiii, art. 121.

[54] The story is well known: St. Athanasius, when a little boy, was playing on the seashore at Alexandria with some companions of his own age, several of whom were not baptized. The idea came to them to "play Baptism." Athanasius acted the bishop and baptized those of his companions who had not yet been baptized. The Bishop of Alexandria when informed of the matter recognized the validity of those baptisms. Rufinus is the first to tell this story in his continuation of the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius, Book I, chap. xiv. After him and on his testimony Socrates and Sozomen relate it likewise. But the authenticity of the fact is strongly contested. Cf. TILLEMONT, vol. viii, note 2, on St. Athanasius.

follow that at Alexandria there was very little importance attached to the intention required in the minister or the subject of the sacrament, but the fact is not sufficiently authentic to allow this conclusion. St. Augustine's silence on the matter and his assertion that no one before him had examined the cases of Baptism that he studies (non praecedentibus talibus, quorum sententias sequi mallem), inclines us not to take Rufinus's story as strictly true.[55]

A different document, if it be authentic, may have inspired St. Augustine in this matter: the acts of the Martyrdom of St. Genesius. As the leader of a troop of comedians at Rome, this future saint conceived the idea of performing the ceremonies of Christian Baptism before the Emperor Diocletian. But during the sacrilegious parody, Genesius, moved by God's grace, was converted, took his part in all seriousness, piously received Baptism, and at the end of the representation declared to the Emperor that he was a sincere Christian. He was put to death about the year 303. "The historical value of the story is quite questionable," says Dom Leclerq,[56] "despite the favorable judgment of Tillemont." [57] We have no right then to quote this document as Luther did,[58] for affirming the validity of a sacrament, administered with the sole intention of burlesquing the Christian worship or ridiculing it. In the episode of St. Genesius there was,

[55] Rufinus, it is true, wrote his *History* in 402 or 403, two or three years after St. Augustine's *De Baptismo*. But the fact related must have occurred towards 310. The Bishop of Hippo consequently could have been acquainted with it at the time he wrote his treatise.

[56] *Les Martyrs*, vol. ii, p. 428.

[57] *Mémoires*, vol. iv, on St. Genesius.

[58] *De captivitate babyl.*, De baptismo, t. ii, p. 286.

besides, one who took the matter seriously; it was the blessed martyr suddenly converted. St. Augustine would not perhaps have judged unfavorably the Baptism acted on the stage, in the case where by chance, the actor playing the part of the baptized would have been unexpectedly converted during the execution of the sacrilegious travesty (si quis existat qui [in mimo] fideliter subito commotus accipiat [baptisma]).[59]

The dogma of the intention, then remains enshrouded in obscurities, even after St. Augustine. Indeed to set forth dogmatic problems is one thing; to find the solution is quite another; the doctors of the Church are all witnesses to that fact.

The problem of the intention which gave so much trouble to St. Augustine will be solved with no difficulty by the authors of the Middle Ages, thanks to the new lights which Catholic tradition, ever guided by the Holy Ghost, will furnish them.

§ IV. *The Dogma of the Intention in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.*

The extensive development of sacramentary theology effected in the 12th. century was most naturally to lead writers to treat of the intention on the part of minister and subject of the Sacraments. The theologians of that period took up again the problem that St. Augustine had been unable to solve: Is Baptism valid, if administered for the sake of amusement or mockery?[60]

[59] *De bapt. contr. Donat.*, vii, 101. Cf. 102. It is a case entirely similar to that of St. Genesius that St. Augustine considers, without settling it.

[60] Hugh of Saint Victor, *De Sacramentis*, lib. II, 6, 13; *Sum. Sent.*, tract. v, 9; Peter Lombard, *Sent.* IV, Dist. 6, 5.

Two solutions were proposed and both found defenders, though unequally numerous.

According to the first opinion, no intention is required in the minister; in order that the Baptism be valid, it is enough that the baptismal rite be accomplished according to the ritual prescriptions of the Church (in forma Ecclesiae). Yet if the subject baptized be an adult, he must have the intention of receiving Baptism, in order that the sacrament be valid. "Si quis baptizaretur adultus atque discretus, necessarium esset, ut baptizandi habeat intentionem, et erit verum baptisma et ratum, sive intentionem habeat qui baptizat sive non, dummodo illud in forma Ecclesiae tradatur. Si vero puer est qui baptizatur, ejus intentio non exigitur, nec refert, utrum qui baptizat habeat intentionem dandi vel non, dummodo id fiat in forma Ecclesiae." [61]

The story of St. Athanasius' Baptism recorded above had no little influence on the rise of this theory. This solution was adopted by Roland Bandinelli among others.

Hugh of St. Victor informs us that many "ignorant" men applied this solution to the Eucharist, exaggerating it still further. Thus they thought that it sufficed for any person at all to pronounce the sacramental words over the bread and the wine, no matter what his intention, in order that the Eucharistic consecration might be valid, just as if in the Sacraments no intention, no will to perform them was demanded in the ministers.[62]

[61] Roland, *Sent.* (Gietl, p. 206.)

[62] *De Sacramentis,* lib. II, 6, 13: Quidam imperiti existimant verba illa quae ad conficiendam Eucharistiam instituta sunt: a quacumque persona, sive in quocumque loco et qualicunque in-

This solution was fiercely attacked by Hugh of St. Victor, by the author of the *Summa Sententiarum,* and by Peter Lombard.

To baptize validly it is not enough to perform the baptismal ceremony: there must be besides the intention of baptizing; otherwise the administration of the sacrament would not be a rational act. For no one can be said truly to do a thing, when he has not the intention of doing it, even though he would imitate it exteriorly. To hold the contrary would be "ridiculous." When one washes a child in order to cleanse it, or to strengthen it, not to baptize it, who would dare to say that Baptism is conferred, even if to render the bath more beneficial, the three Divine Persons should be invoked? Merely to go through the baptismal rite is not enough then: the intention of baptizing must be had besides. "Ubi ergo intentio baptizandi est . . . sacramentum est." [63]

The *Summa Sententiarum,* setting up this doctrine as a general principle, declares that in every sacrament two things are necessary: the performance of the sacramental rite, and the intention of administering the sacrament.[64] Therefore they manifest the

tentione super panem et vinum prolata, effectum consecrationis et sanctificationis habere, quasi sacramenta Dei sic instituta sint, ut nullam operandi rationem admittant.

[63] Hugh of Saint Victor, *Ibid.*

[64] Tract. vi, 9: In omni enim sacramento ista duo necessaria sunt, ut forma sacramenti servetur et intentio illud celebrandi habeatur. P. Lombard, *Sent.* IV, Dist. 6, 5: In hoc (baptismate) et in aliis sacramentis sicut forma est servanda, ita et intentio illud celebrandi est habenda. However, Dist. xxvii, 3, P. Lombard pronounces a marriage valid, if the parties have outwardly expressed their consent, whilst in their inmost soul they had no intention at all to marry.

deepest ignorance who believe that the Eucharistic words, pronounced without the intention, effect the consecration. The sacrament of the altar is validly celebrated only when the minister is a priest, pronounces the words of the Institution, and has the intention of consecrating while pronouncing them. "Haec autem tria ad istud sacramentum necessaria sunt. Ordo, actio, intentio. Ordo, ut sit sacerdos; actio, ut verba illa proferat; intentio, ut proferat ad istud. Quandoque enim aliquis sacerdos profert verba illa ut alium doceat quomodo hoc facturus sit; sed non habent tunc illam efficaciam, quia non ad hoc dicuntur." [65]

This solution, so vigorously defended by Hugh of St. Victor and his school, did not succeed in eliminating that of Roland; there was a grave objection against it. If it does not suffice that the minister perform the sacramental rite in keeping with the prescriptions of the Church, but if he must also have the intention (in mente) of conferring the sacrament, how can we tell whether that interior and hidden intention exists, and consequently whether the Sacraments are really conferred on us? The difficulty, as is clear, is serious.

It led, in the beginning of the 13th. century, to a reaction against the teaching of Hugh of St. Victor; we find echoes of it in the fifth book of the "Sentences" [66] of Cardinal Robert Pulleyn (†1221). There the arguments proposed by Hugh are refuted, particularly that drawn from the child's bath accompanied fortuitously by the baptismal formula. Robert Pul-

[65] *Sum. Sent.*, tract. vi, 4.

[66] *Sent.*, lib. V, cap. xv, xvi; *P.L.*, clxxxvi, 841, 842. See also PETER OF POITIERS, *Sent.*, lib. V, cap. viii; PETER OF LA PALU, *IV Sent.*, Dist. 6, qu. 2.

leyn ends his dissertation with this principle, worthy of Catharinus: Baptism is valid, when the rite is outwardly accomplished in its entirety, whatever be the inner intention of him who baptizes or of him who is baptized.[67]

Unquestionably we have here two schools directly opposed to each other, the one which demands in the minister a true intention of conferring the sacrament, and in the subject, a true intention of receiving it, whilst the other rests satisfied with the integral performance of the sacramental rite, regardless of the interior intentions of the minister or of the subject. We shall meet the two camps again in the days of St. Thomas.

*
* *

It was the solution and argumentation of the school of St. Victor which appealed to the famous scholastics of the 13th. century. The minister must really have the intention of conferring the sacrament, otherwise his act would not be that of a rational being.[68] Besides the sacramental action, for example, the ablution, may be employed for different purposes, to wash or to refresh one. It is then the minister's intention which will determine its sacramental purpose, hence that intention is necessary.[69]

To these arguments is added another which defines yet more precisely the object of the intention, and

[67] *Ibid.*, cap. xvi: Sacramentum ergo baptismi, quod *totum extrinsecus agitur*, integram sui obtinens naturam, nullum omnino videtur suscipere detrimentum, quidquid irrisionis cujuslibetve erroris *in mente* versetur aut baptizantis aut baptisma suscipientis.

[68] Alexander of Hales, IV, quaest. 8, membr. 3, art. 1.

[69] St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, 3 p., qu. 64, art. 8; St. Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, D. 6, p. 2, art. 2, qu. 1.

which carries the doctrine to its complete development.

The minister, according to the teaching of tradition, is the representative, the rational instrument of Jesus Christ and the Church; his sacramental action is an act of Christ and the Church. The minister must then by the intention make himself dependent on them, and purpose to do what they intend to do in the sacramental operation.[70] Now the minister does what Christ and the Church intend, when, in conferring the rite, he has the intention of acting conformably to the traditional usage of the Church:

"Si aliquis uteretur forma debita verborum et haberet intentionem faciendi quod facit Ecclesia, ut sumatur verbum confuse; i. e. intendit facere quod consuevit Ecclesia, baptismus esset."[71]

The dogma reaches its complete development in the first half of the 13th. century; and it flows from the teaching of the Fathers as conclusion flows from premises. If the minister of the sacrament is the representative of Christ and the Church, he must have the intention of doing what Christ and the Church, acting through the minister in the sacramental action, effect.

The intention of receiving the sacrament is equally necessary in the recipient,[72] but the qualities it ought to have are not yet accurately laid down.

[70] Alex. of Hales, *l. c.*: Baptizans efficitur minister Ecclesiae per hoc quod intendit Ecclesia; unde necessaria est intentio.—St. Thomas, *l. c.*

[71] William of Auxerre († 1223), *In IV Sent.*, De baptismo. This author is the first to employ the formula "intentio faciendi quod facit Ecclesia."

[72] St. Thomas, qu. 64, art. 8, ad 2um; qu. 68, art. 7.

Still the everlasting objection remained to be solved: since the "mental" intention of the minister being a hidden thing, if it is necessary for validity, the faithful will never know whether or not they have really received the Sacraments, and they will therefore remain in painful uncertainty regarding their salvation.[73]

Two answers were proposed by the 13th. century authors. According to some, the sacrament is never valid when the "mental" intention of doing what the Church does, is not present in the minister. Still, if the sacrament conferred without this intention be necessary for salvation, as, for instance Baptism, Jesus Christ makes up for the deficiency, when the subject of Baptism is a child; and when the subject is an adult, his faith and devotion play for him the part of the baptismal washing.[74] Alexander of Hales upheld this view.[75] The Angelic Doctor cannot bring himself to adopt it; for although the grace of the sacrament may very well be supplied, when the Baptism is void, the same cannot be said of the character, which is imprinted only through the sacramental rite.

His preferences go to another opinion which seems to have been inspired by Robert Pulleyn, and which Catharinus' defenders will later use. The intention of the minister is that of the Church which he represents. Now the intention of the Church is expressed by the

[73] St. Thomas, qu. 64, art. 8, 2°.

[74] St. Thomas, *l. c.*, ad 2um: Quidam enim dicunt quod requiratur mentalis intentio in ministro, quae si desit non perficitur sacramentum; sed hunc defectum, inquiunt, in pueris qui non habent intentionem accedendi ad sacramentum, supplet Christus qui interius baptizat; in adultis autem qui intendunt sacramentum suscipere, supplet illum defectum fides et devotio. Cf. *In IV Sent.*, Dist. 6, qu. 1, art. 2.

[75] IV, qu. 8, membr. 3, art. 1: In casu isto [infantis baptizati

sacramental words pronounced by the minister. Therefore there is no need of concern about the "mental" intention of the one who confers the sacrament, except in the case where he would manifest outwardly that he acts in derision: "Alii melius dicunt quod minister sacramenti agit in persona totius Ecclesiae, cujus est minister. In verbis autem quae profert exprimitur intentio Ecclesiae, quae sufficit ad perfectionem sacramenti, nisi contrarium exterius exprimatur ex parte ministri vel recipientis sacramentum." [76]

According to St. Thomas, the "mental," i. e. the interior intention, would not be required in the minister of the Sacraments, at least of the Sacraments necessary for salvation: the intention of the Church, manifested by the outward performance of the sacramental rite would suffice. And since it is an easy matter to see whether or not the minister performs the rite

sine intentione baptizandi] pie supponi potest quod Summus Sacerdos supplebit.

[76] St. Thomas, *c. l.*— The Angelic Doctor exposes still more clearly this opinion in his Commentary on the IVth. book of Sentences. Dist. 6, qu. 1, art. 2: Alii dicunt quod in baptismo, et aliis sacramentis quae habent in forma actum exercitum, non requiritur mentalis intentio, sed sufficit expressio intentionis per verba ab Ecclesia instituta: et ideo si forma servatur nec aliquid exterius dicitur, quod intentionem contrariam exprimat, baptizatus est. Non enim sine causa in sacramentis necessitatis, scilicet baptismo et quibusdam aliis, actus baptizantis tam sollicite expressus est ad intentionis expressionem.— Pope Innocent IV adheres to this opinion in a commentary on the 3rd. Book of *Decretals* (tit. 42, chap. 2, *De baptismo et ejus effectu*): Non est necesse quod baptizans sciat quid sit Ecclesia, quid baptizatus et unde sit: nec quod gerat in mente facere quod facit Ecclesia: imo si contrarium gereret in mente, scilicet non facere quod facit Ecclesia sed tamen facit, quia formam servat, nihilominus baptizatus est dummodo baptizare intendat. *Innocentii IV in quinque libros decretalium Commentaria,* Venetiis, 1610, p. 544.

properly, it may readily be known whether or not he has sufficient intention.

Such, at all events, is the interpretation of the text of the *Summa,* given by the partisans of Ambrose Catharinus.[77]

The question of the purely outward intention was not then unknown to the theologians of the 13th. century. They, so to speak, stated the problem; or rather it arose of itself from the fact that the intention of the minister was reckoned an essential condition for validity.[78] The importance of the question gives us a foreboding of the fierceness of forthcoming discussions.

* * *

While the dogma of the intention was being universally taught in the schools of the 13th. century, the Church was proposing it to the belief of the faithful, and above all was defending it against heresies.

The profession of faith imposed by Pope Innocent III on the Waldenses who were converted to the Catholic Church contains a very clear affirmation of the necessity of the intention in the priest who consecrates the Eucharist. The Waldenses opposed to ecclesiastical hierarchy, pretended that priestly Orders were not required for the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, and that any one could offer it, provided he were worthy. It is this error that the Pope condemned.

[77] DROUIN, *op. cit.* (MIGNE, pp. 1498 sq.). See the contrary interpretation in FRANZELIN, *op. cit.,* th. xvii, and in PESCH, n. 285.

[78] Durandus of St. Pourçain in the fourteenth century speaks clearly in favor of "mental" intention of the minister, and opposes the defenders of the adverse opinion. *In IV Sent.,* Dist. 6, qu. 2.

To be a priest, and to pronounce the words of the Canon of the Mass with a "faithful intention,"— such are the conditions necessary for the Eucharistic consecration.[79]

When at the beginning of the 13th. century repression began to be exercised against infidels, Jews, or others, several cases of conscience relating to baptisms received through compulsion were brought up. The Archbishop of Arles asked for a solution from Pope Innocent III, and gave him opportunity to expose his teaching on the intention required in the subject of Baptism. The Pope was also consulted on the validity of Baptism administered to several during their sleep, and of Baptism conferred on subjects affected with insanity.[80]

Before giving his answer, the Pontiff commences by laying down the principles governing the matter.

According to certain authors, he says, Baptism and Ordination are valid and produce the character, if not

[79] DENZINGER, *Enchirid.*, n. 370 (new edit., n. 424): Ad quod officium (eucharistiam consecrandi) tria sunt, ut credimus, necessaria: scilicet certa persona, id est, presbyter ab episcopo, ut praediximus, ad illud proprie officium constitutus, et illa solemnia verba quae a sanctis Patribus in canone sunt expressa, et fidelis intentio proferentis.— The *Summa Sententiarum*, we have already seen, had formulated a doctrine like that of Innocent III.

[80] *Decret.*, lib. iii, tit. 42, cap. 3, Majores, *Corpus Juris can.*, t. ii, p. 621 (ed. Richter), DENZINGER, n. 342 (new edit., n. 411): Quaeritur utrum dormientibus et amentibus sacramenti saltem character in Baptismo imprimatur, ut excitati a somno, vel ab aegritudine liberati, non sint denuo baptizandi?— These *dormientes* were probably, according to the context, recalcitrants who stubbornly refused Baptism and on whom some persons, whose zeal outran their prudence, conferred the sacrament in their sleep, and then forced them afterwards to lead a Christian life.

grace, not only when they are administered to subjects asleep or demented, but even when they are forcibly conferred on those who obstinately refuse them. This view is opposed to the traditional usage forbidding to thrust upon an unwilling person Baptism and the subsequent obligations of a Christian life.

Therefore the Pope prefers the opinion of the theologians who make two categories of those persons who are forced to receive Baptism, according to the degree of violence used against them.

If the violence be only relative, as in the case of those who approach Baptism out of fear of punishment, the sacrament is valid, the character is produced, and the obligation of living as a Christian exists in its entirety. "Is, qui terroribus atque suppliciis violenter attrahitur, et ne detrimentum incurrat, baptismi suscipit sacramentum, talis (sicut et is qui ficte ad baptismum accedit) characterem suscipit christianitatis impressum, et ipse tanquam conditionaliter volens, licet absolute non velit, cogendus est ad observantiam fidei christianae."

Those who receive Baptism under these conditions are compared to those who approach the sacrament *ficti,* i. e. interiorly refusing Baptism, without exteriorly manifesting their refusal *(ficti, qui quamvis non ore, corde tamen dissentiunt).*[81]

A decree of a Council of Toledo is cited in support of this doctrine. Sisebut (†621), the pious king of the Visigoths, had forced the conversion of a large number of Spanish Jews, by offering the alternative of Baptism or torture. Many, in order to escape the tortures had feigned conversion, were baptized and re-

[81] *Ibid.*

ceived Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. The Council of Toledo reproved the excessive zeal of Sisebut, but declared that the Jews who had been brought to Baptism by the persecution were really baptized.[82] Pope Innocent III, then, would admit the validity of Baptism administered to one who interiorly has the intention of not being baptized, but does not reveal exteriorly his unwillingness.[83] Another argument for the followers of Catharinus; they will make good use of it.[84]

As for the second category, those who manifestly refuse Baptism and who are subjected to absolute violence, they do not receive the sacrament validly. They are no more baptized than the Martyrs, compelled by physical force to offer incense to idols, are apostates.

Having recalled these principles, Innocent applies them to the cases of conscience proposed. If before falling asleep or before becoming demented, those persons had the express intention not to be baptized, their Baptism is absolutely void; for the will of not receiving a sacrament nullifies its effect. But if on the contrary, being catechumens, they had already formed the desire of being baptized, then the Baptism received in sleep or insanity is valid. As a matter of fact, the Church is wont to baptize at the moment of death those who can no longer speak, but have previously

[82] *Ibid.* The same case presented itself in the eighth century when Baptism was imposed on the Saxons by Charlemagne under penalty of death.

[83] Let us note, however, that the Council of Toledo cited by Pope Innocent III is deciding a case of conscience, without any pretension of formulating a doctrinal decision.

[84] Cf. DROUIN, *De Sacr. in gen.*, qu. vii, appendix (MIGNE, *Curs. Theol.*, t. xx, 1538).

expressed a wish to receive the sacrament.[85] It is impossible to be clearer or more explicit.

In the 15th. century the Church twice solemnly interposed to proclaim that the minister of the sacrament must have the intention of doing what the Church does.

The partisans of Wiclef and John Huss, whose doctrine is in some measure allied to that of the Cathari, were inclined to make the validity of the Sacraments depend on the state of grace of the minister's soul. This is why Pope Martin V in his Bull *Inter cunctas* of February 21, 1418, prescribed that persons of doubtful orthodoxy should be cross-examined and be asked in particular, whether they believed that an unworthy priest, performing correctly the sacramental rite with the intention of doing what the Church does, administers the Sacraments validly.[86] Finally, a few years later, Pope Eugenius IV teaches in the *Decree to the Armenians* that the intention of doing what the Church does is essential to the validity of the Sacraments: "Omnia sacramenta tribus perficiuntur, videlicet rebus tanquam materia, verbis tanquam forma, et persona ministri conferentis sacramentum cum intentione fa-

[85] *Ibid.* Dormientes autem et amentes, si priusquam amentiam incurrerent, aut dormirent, in contradictione persisterent; quia in eis intelligitur contradictionis propositum perdurare, et si fuerint sic immersi, characterem non suscipiunt sacramenti. Secus autem si prius catechumeni extitissent, et habuissent propositum baptizandi: unde tales in necessitatis articulo consuevit Ecclesia baptizare. Tunc ergo characterem sacramentalis imprimit operatio cum obicem voluntatis contrariae non invenit obsistentem.

[86] Utrum credat, quod malus sacerdos cum debita materia et forma et cum intentione faciendi quod facit Ecclesia, vere conficiat, vere absolvat, vere baptizet, vere conferat alia sacramenta. DENZINGER, n. 566 (n. 672).

ciendi, quod facit Ecclesia: quorum si aliquod desit, non perficitur sacramentum." [87]

The dogma of the necessity of intention is then in very truth the theoretical expression of the traditional practice of the Church. The minister of the sacrament was ever considered the representative and proxy of Christ. When, from St. Augustine on, ecclesiastical writers reflecting on the conditions needed for the validity of the Sacraments dealt formally with the intention, hesitations arose. Soon precise opinions were formed. A goodly number of theologians demanded in minister and in subject the intention of conferring or of receiving the sacrament. Others were satisfied with the due performance of the sacramental rite and did not trouble themselves as to what the minister and the subject thought in their heart. But all, save the ignorant, mentioned by Hugh of St. Victor, and heretics, declared the sacrament void when administered in circumstances where minister or subject clearly intend not to act seriously.

The sixteenth century Reformers were therefore outside the traditional line of thought when they maintained that the Sacraments would be valid, even if the minister should be drunk or should be manifestly acting for the sake of ridicule or amusement. It is in opposition to this teaching that the Council of Trent defined the dogma of the necessity of intention, and thus consecrated the doctrinal development, the history of which we have outlined. Still the Council did not pronounce on the necessity of the *interior* intention of the minister. This serious question which had al-

[87] Denzing., n. 590 (n. 695).

ready perplexed theologians even since the 12th. century, was taken up again at the time of the Reformation and studied then under all its aspects.

§ V. *The Controversy on the Purely Exterior Intention — Ambrose Catharinus, O. P.*

Lancelot Politi, who took the name Ambrose Catarino or Catharinus when he entered the order of St. Dominic, was born in Sienna in 1487. He was sent as theologian to the Council of Trent in 1545. Being appointed Bishop of Minori in 1547, he took his part among the Fathers of the Council in the seventh session wherein were defined the sacramentary dogmas. There is every reason to suppose that he took a prominent part in the discussion of the dogma of the necessity of intention in the minister: for he was convinced that the *interior* intention of doing what the Church does is not requisite for the validity, but that it is enough to purpose to perform the sacramental rite, outwardly but seriously. He even wrote, at Trent, in 1547, a treatise entitled, *"De necessaria intentione in perficiendis sacramentis"* in which he states and defends his views.[88]

The question not appearing to be sufficiently cleared up, the Council[89] was satisfied with condemning Luther's error and left to the discussions of theologians the investigation into the conditions necessary to the minister's intention in order that he may truly effect and confer the sacrament.

[88] P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den heilig. Sacramenten,* p. 180.

[89] Pallavicini, *Hist. du Concile de Trente,* liv. IX, chap. vi, n. 3. Cf. A. Theiner, *Acta Concil. Trid.*, t. i, p. 404. Alphonsus Salmeron, a theologian of the Council, who discussed the decrees of the seventh session, shared Catharinus' opinion.

Ambrose Catharinus published in Rome five years later, in 1552, his treatise on the intention, along with the rest of his works. The treatise was not criticised, nor declared to be contrary to the doctrine defined by the Council in 1547.[90] Thus it is that Catharinus gave his name to a theory, which, as has been seen, could be traced back several centuries. That an interior intention might not be necessary in the minister is an idea which had naturally come to the minds of those who had reflected on this point of sacramentary theology. But Catharinus set forth the problem in a manner so remarkably precise and in circumstances so particularly solemn, that the result was a hot controversy on which theologians divided. It is this controversy that we have now to relate.

* * *

We may conceive two kinds of intentions of doing what the Church does:[91] the merely exterior intention and the interior intention.

The intention is merely exterior when the minister intends the serious and entire accomplishment of the sacramental rite, and as a matter of fact does accomplish it; but inwardly, yet without any outward evidence thereof, he has the intention of acting in mockery or even has the positive intention not to confer the sacrament. A priest at the altar, robed in the sacerdotal vestments, performing all the ceremonies of the Mass, reciting all the prayers, even the words of the consecration, but who, through a sac-

[90] P. Schanz, *l. c.*

[91] We purposely pass over other kinds of intentions defined by theologians, which ultimately are resolved into the two we here mention.

rilegious simulation, would have the formal intention not to consecrate, would be acting with a merely exterior intention.

But when, on the other hand, the minister of the sacrament not only intends to accomplish the sacramental rite, but, in his inmost heart, purposes with all sincerity to do what the Church does, he has the interior intention. Is the latter intention absolutely necessary for validity? Would not the former be sufficient? This is the problem.

Catharinus and the numerous followers he had after his death,[92] think that the merely exterior intention is the only one required for the validity of the minister's action. For what the Church demands in the administration of the Sacraments is that the minister perform sacramental ceremonies and that he apply the matter and form to the subject in the manner she prescribes. Now, one who seriously discharges the sacred rite does what the Church wishes; therefore he has a sufficient intention of doing what the Church does, whatever be his inner thought or intention:

"Non alia intentio ministri requiritur"— says Catharinus, "nisi ut intendat exterius facere quod facit Ecclesia, quamvis ipse neque credat esse Ecclesiam, neque ullum baptismi spiritaulem effectum, sed satis est ut intendat facere quod Ecclesia jubet per ministros fieri; namque quod illa per minis-

[92] Sententia haec ab Ambrosio Catharino († 1553) suam habet celebritatem, eamque sequuntur theologi praesertim galli, ut Contenson († 1764), Arnaldus († 1694), Nat. Alexander († 1724), Scribonius, Juenin († 1713), L'Herminier († 1735), Serry († 1738), Drouvenius († 1742); ex belgis Farvacques, etc.; ex hispanis Salmeron († 1585); ex italis Parqualigo († 1664), Milante († 1749), Ansaldi († 1779); ex germanis Stattler († 1797), Dobmayer († 1805), Waibel († 1852); ea etiam arrisit recentioribus Oswald, Haas, Glossner. (HURTER, *Theol. dogm. comp.*, t. iii, n. 294.)

tros facit, ipsa facere intelligitur. Quid ergo facit Ecclesia per ministros baptizando? nisi quod legitima utitur materia, adhibens suam verborum formam: hoc igitur si facit minister, profecto illud facere intendit, si sit mente sanus."

In support of this doctrine, they quote the texts which we have seen already, from St. Augustine, Pope Innocent IV, St. Thomas, and also the authority of several other theologians of the Middle Ages.[93] Special stress is laid on the serious practical consequences of the opposite opinion. If the interior intention be demanded, the faithful will ever remain in endless doubt as to the validity of the Sacraments they receive. An evil-minded priest can baptize and absolve invalidly, and a bishop administer void ordinations, without there being any possibility of suspecting it. These are very weighty reasons; they had already made a deep impression on the mediæval writers, and they surely would have rallied all minds to Catharinus' opinion, if Catholic dogma were a purely human doctrine. However, as we have already seen more than once, theological thought sometimes takes a turn that baffles human foresight, and forces upright and sincere souls to recognize God's supernatural action in the Catholic Church.

In opposition to Catharinus' party arose a new theological school.[94] It took up afresh the teaching of Hugh of St. Victor, which had not indeed been for-

[93] Cf. Drouin, *op. cit.*, (Migne, t. xx, 1492, sq.). An argument was also built upon the answer of Pope Nicholas I to the Bulgarians, an answer completely irrelevant. Denzinger, *Enchirid.*, n. 264 (n. 335).

[94] The principal theologians of this school are: Bellarmine, Suarez, Vasquez, de Lugo, Tournely, Benedict XIV (*De Synod.*, vii, 4, 8, 9), Franzelin, Hurter, Chr. Pesch, Morgott, Billot, etc.

gotten from the 12th. to the 16th. century, and affirmed that the minister must have an interior intention. He who wishes to confer validly the sacrament, cannot rest satisfied with performing the sacred rite, but he must also sincerely intend in his inmost soul to do what the Church does in administering the Sacraments. It is not, however, required that the minister have as complete a knowledge of the Sacraments as the Church has,— else a pagan or a heretic could not validly baptize. It suffices, but it is indispensable, that he really consider the sacrament which he confers to be a sacred rite of the Church. If he did but perform the sacramental ceremonies seriously, whilst inwardly ridiculing what he does, or *a fortiori* intending not to confer the sacrament, his administrations would be void. In a word, the minister of the sacrament is the representative, the legate of Christ and the Church; in the sacramental action he must conform his will to that of Christ and the Church. And how could he truly represent Christ and the Church, who would intend to ridicule the sacrament, even though exteriorly he should accurately perform all the ceremonies? Is anyone really the representative of another, if he executes his orders as far as outward form goes, but with an intention contrary to that of his principal?

This doctrine gives rise to some anxiety, for it multiplies the causes of nullity in the Sacraments. Its defenders, nevertheless, make answer that we must trust in God's Providence, who will not suffer that Sacraments should frequently be void through lack of intention. Besides, a perverse minister can nullify the sacramental action not only by vitiating his intention, but as well by altering the essential matter

and form, without the attendants knowing it.[95] In the work of our salvation, no small share anyway must be left to trust in God.

The theologians who deem the interior intention necessary must interpret the text of ancient authors which go counter to their view. The insufficiency of their explanations let us frankly admit. Before the 16th. century, writers had perceived the problem of the intention and many solved it in the same sense as Catharinus. But the controversies between Catholics and Protestants on this question, and, above all, the definitions of the Council of Trent have since directed the theological thought to the opposite way. To-day the common doctrine declaring the interior intention necessary must, we think, be followed; the authorities brought against it belong to an epoch when no serious discussion had yet taken place on the matter, when the Church especially had not intervened in any way.

For, although the Church refused to settle the controversy at the Council of Trent, she has since shown disfavor toward Catharinus' opinion. The Augustinian monk, Francis Farvacques, defended at Louvain in 1678 the following proposition: "Baptism is validly conferred by a minister who observes all the external rite and preserves the form of the sacrament, but says resolutely to himself: 'I have no intention of doing what the Church does.'"[96]

[95] BELLARMINE, *De Sacram. in gen.*, lib. i, cap. 28.

[96] DENZING., n. 1185 (n. 1318): Valet Baptismus collatus a ministro, qui omnem ritum externum formamque baptizandi observat, intus vero in corde suo apud se resolvit: Non intendo facere quod facit Ecclesia.— Cf. *Dict. de Théol. Cathol.*, art. "*Alexandre* VIII," i. 761.

This proposition was condemned December 7, 1690, by Pope Alexander VIII. It is not, however, Catharinus' doctrine, that was censured; we have the declaration of Rome herself on the point. Catharinus was content to say that the exterior intention was sufficient, without formally specifying, as Farvacques did, that it would be so even when the minister would have in his inmost soul the positive intention of not doing what the Church does. It must be confessed, nevertheless, that this condemnation was calculated to discredit Catharinus' doctrine;[97] and this is just what happened: so much so, that hardly anyone to-day dares openly adopt it.[98]

At all events, in practice, one is never allowed to act according to that opinion; for although it has good reasons in its favor, in the administration of the Sacraments, the safest course must ever be followed. According to Benedict XIV,[99] when there is reason to believe that a sacrament which cannot be repeated and is of great importance, v. g. Baptism or Holy Orders, has been very probably conferred by a minister who had not the interior intention, that sacrament is to be repeated conditionally, unless time allows to consult Rome on the line of conduct to be followed. Rome's answer will almost always be that Baptism or Ordination must be repeated conditionally. The development of theological thought since the Council of Trent seems decidedly to be little in favor of the system of Catharinus.

[97] Qua damnatione negari non potest grave vulnus praefatae (Catharinae) opinioni inflictum. BENEDICT XIV, *De Synod.*, lib. vii, 4, 8.

[98] See, however, GASPARRI, *De ordinatione*, t. i, p. 429, n. 643, Paris, 1893.

[99] *De Synod.*, lib. vii, 4, 9.

§ VI. *The Qualities Required in the Intention of Minister and of Subject.*

It is clear from the preceding pages that both the minister and the recipient must inwardly intend to do what the Church does. Theologians [1] teach that the subject must intend to receive the sacred rite. If he would merely lend himself outwardly to the ceremony, with the actual intention of performing a purely profane action or playing a farce, the sacrament would be void.

It is equally necessary for the validity of the sacrament that the minister's intention be actual or at least virtual. The intention of doing something — in the present case, of doing what the Church does — may be actual, virtual or habitual.

The intention is actual when the will is *consciously* exercised at the very moment upon the thing intended. It is virtual, on the contrary, when one acts in a state of distraction. Finally, the habitual intention is that which has ceased to be virtual. Two causes especially make a virtual intention habitual: a rather considerable lapse of time, which, however, it is hard to define precisely, and an accident such as somnambulism, hypnotism or drunkenness. A person becoming intoxicated or falling into a state of somnambulism while performing an action, continues with an habitual intention what he has commenced with a virtual or an actual intention.[2]

The actual intention of doing what the Church does is not requisite in the minister of the sacrament for

[1] Cajetan is, however, of a somewhat different opinion.

[2] These definitions are different from those given by modern philosophers.

the validity of his action; the virtual intention suffices. Hence the sacrament is valid even though the minister is distracted while conferring it,— provided of course that the distraction does not hinder him from performing in their entirety the essential rites. This is St. Thomas' teaching,[3] with this difference, however, that the Angelic Doctor calls habitual, what we to-day call virtual intention. As for the habitual intention as above defined, it is entirely inadequate: he who would administer a sacrament in a drunken, or somnambulistic, or hypnotic state, would perform an action that is null, even though before the occurrence he might have had the most formal intention of doing what the Church does; for in that abnormal state he no longer acts as a rational being capable of being the representative of Christ and the Church.

A less perfect intention is required in the adult recipient of the sacrament. Excepting Matrimony and Penance, which demand at least a virtual intention, the Sacraments may be validly conferred on such persons as have had the intention of receiving them and have never retracted that intention. And even, in case of Sacraments conferred on the sick, the subject's intention may be presumed when he is unable to speak, even although he has given no previous indication of his wish to receive the Sacraments in his last hour.

Generally, the intention of conferring the sacrament should be absolute. It may, however, be dependent on a condition, provided the condition be realized at the moment when the sacrament is admin-

[3] *Sum. theol.*, p. 3, qu. 64, art. 8, ad 3um.

istered; this takes place when the condition refers to a present or a past fact. If the intention were dependent on a future, contingent fact, it would not really be existing when the sacrament is conferred, and hence by defect of intention the sacrament would be void.

The custom of administering conditional Baptism is attested in the 13th. century by a decretal of Pope Alexander III prescribing the repetition of Baptism under condition, for persons doubtfully baptized: "De quibus dubium est an baptizati fuerint, baptizantur his verbis praemissis: Si baptizatus es, non te baptizo: sed si nondum baptizatus es, ego te baptizo etc." [4] But this practice is doubtless much older. It was inspired, as we learn from Pope Alexander III, by the desire of avoiding the danger of repeating Baptism when a priest is obliged to administer it to a person who might have received it before.

In the 15th. century Gerson taught as "a sure theological conclusion" that in many cases, confession may be made conditionally, and absolution likewise given conditionally.[5] Notwithstanding several protests, this doctrine was eventually adopted by theologians and followed by confessors. Furthermore, since the reason that had given rise to the practice of baptizing and absolving conditionally held good in the case of the other Sacraments, theologians soon taught that the conditional administrations of all the Sacraments is valid, and in a great many cases may be al-

[4] *Decretal.,* lib. iii, tit. 42; *De Baptismo et ejus effectu,* cap. 2. *Corpus juris can.,* t. ii, p. 619 (ed. Richter). Cf. DENZING., n. 332 (n. 399).

[5] *De schismate tollendo, Opera omnia,* Antwerp, 1706, t. ii, p. 79. Cf. *Dict. de Théolog. Cath.,* art. "Absolution conditionnelle," i, 252 ss.

lowed. This theological teaching makes the administration of the Sacraments easier, and spares pastors many a moral torture: these are advantages not enjoyed by those who lived at an age when sacramentary theology was not yet sufficiently developed. The Church, reflecting on her Sacraments, constantly discovers new aspects which suggest to her means of living in yet fuller enjoyment of those wonderful graces that Jesus has given her.

CONCLUSION

Having come to the end of our study, let us now take a general view of the development of sacramentary theology and try to formulate the law which governed it.

The history of the development falls easily into four periods — from the beginning to St. Augustine; from St. Augustine to the 12th. century; from the 12th. century to the Council of Trent; and from the Council of Trent to our own day.

In the first four centuries, the Church was administering the Sacraments, with no thought of theorizing about them; her sacramental practice preceded by far its dogmatic expression.

Jesus gave the Sacraments to His Church,— either in the explicit or in the implicit state. She used her Sacraments according to the demands and the needs of the time. From the very first days of her life, she administered Baptism, which was followed by the rite conferring the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Eucharist, the participation of the Body and Blood of Christ nourishing the supernatural life in the newly baptized. The need of providing for government in the churches and of securing the celebration of the Christian worship led the Apostles to confer on the elders of the Christian communities, by the imposition of hands, the sacerdotal powers which they had received from Jesus. In accordance with the Savior's

commands, sick Christians were healed with oil, and even obtained by this unction the remission of their sins. When the beautiful Christian ideal, viz.: never after Baptism to fall into grievous sin, was no longer attainable, owing to the growing number of the faithful, the Church made use of the power given her by Christ to forgive post-baptismal sins. Christian Marriage, restored by Jesus to its primitive perfection, was always considered by the Church as a most sacred institution and one implying a most lofty symbolism. Its sacramental efficacy little by little unfolded itself to Christian consciousness.

All the components of the Sacraments are found then, at least as to their essential principles, in the primitive Church. But all did not attract in the same measure the attention of the ecclesiastical writers of the first centuries. The Apostolic Fathers speak only of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. The writings of Tertullian add Confirmation and Penance. St. Cyprian speaks, in many instances, of Ordination. But the rites of initiation into Christianity, viz.: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, held from the beginning of the 3rd. century a preponderating and almost exclusive place in the thoughts of Christian writers. On them the first sacramental speculations were made. The Greek Fathers, from Origen on, inspired by St. Paul's symbolism of Baptism and aided by the Platonic theory of signs, consider the washing as the sign of the purifying of the soul. The anointing which followed Baptism is also the symbol of the sanctifying action of the Holy Ghost. Thus appears the first attempt at the definition of a sacrament as an efficacious sign or symbol. The custom of blessing the material of the Sacraments (water and oil) led the

Greek and Latin writers to explain the sacramental efficacy by the presence of the Holy Ghost, or of some Divine power in the material blessed. The sacramental rite of Baptism was thus composed of three elements, the water, the blessing or consecration of that water, and the invocation of the Trinity. But there did not yet exist any strong theory on the composition of the Sacraments; writers were satisfied to describe the existing customs. Among these customs, that of not repeating Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders, when they had once been conferred in the Catholic Church, implies the doctrine of the character, a doctrine already insinuated by the common use, from the 2nd. century on, of the term *sphragis* (seal), to designate Baptism and Confirmation. The Baptismal controversy finally brought forth the decisions of Pope Stephen and of the Council of Arles (314) declaring the validity of Baptism independent of the belief of the minister. In this first period, sacramentary theology was then very incomplete, and very vague, its first outlines being hardly visible. Still the principles were laid down for later writers to develop.

St. Augustine, incited by his indefatigable curiosity and by the Donatist controversy, was the cause of considerable progress in sacramentary theology. Inspired by the Greek writers who had gone before him, he formulated a scientific definition of a sacrament,— *Sacramentum, i. e. sacrum signum,* and he perceived the binary composition of the sacramental rite: *accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.* He strongly suspected the doctrine of the necessity of intention in the minister and the subject, which has always been involved in the feeling, as old as the Church, that

the minister is the agent of Christ. In his discussions with the Donatists, he laid down clearly the role of both minister and subject in the efficacy of the Sacraments. The part of the minister is simply to accomplish the complete sacramental rite. Whatever be his unworthiness, the minister ever remains, by the permanent character received in Ordination, the representative of Christ and of the Church. His sacramental acting is therefore an act of Christ operating through the Church. The efficacy of the Sacraments is thus objective and independent of the moral dispositions of the minister. As to the evil dispositions of the subject, they are "obstacles" to the reception of the grace of the Sacraments. He, who has himself baptized in an heretical or schismatical church, receives indeed the baptismal character, but not the remission of his sins. The sacrament will produce its effect, will "revive" as the later Scholastics termed it, when the heretic or schismatic enters the true Church; for outside its fold, there is no remission of sins or conferring of grace. The exigencies of controversy thus led Augustine to bring to light the doctrine of the character, which is simply an explanation of the Church's practice of not repeating Baptism nor Holy Orders. Sacramental dogma always flows from the life of the Church.

This doctrine of Augustine was forgotten in the early Middle Ages (ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries). The ignorance caused by the social revolutions of an infant civilization, and the need of reforming an incontinent and simoniacal clergy, led the ecclesiastical writers and even the pastors of the Church, to subordinate the efficacy of the Sacraments to the dignity of

the minister. Hence the numerous reordinations of those guilty of simony. But in the 12th. century, a more serious and deliberate study refound, never to let perish, the Augustinian teaching, and there commenced a third period of sacramentary speculations, the most brilliant of all.

The movement was started by the school of St. Victor in the person of Hugh, and by the school of Abelard in the person of Abelard himself. It was continued by Peter Lombard and brought to completion by the great theologians of the 13th. century. Peter Lombard formulated the complete definition of a sacrament and drew up the definitive list of the seven rites to which, in the light of traditional teaching, this name referred. He applied to the Sacraments, with the exception of Penance and Matrimony, the opinion of St. Augustine as to their binary composition. Peter of Poitiers distinguished between the *opus operantis* and the *opus operatum* which is considered a cause of grace. Whence the problem, so much discussed in the 13th. century, of the causality of the Sacraments. Three principal solutions were brought forth: that of the *occasional causality,* preferred by the Franciscan school; that of the *dispositive causality,* of Alexander of Hales; and that of the *instrumental efficient causality,* of St. Thomas. Theologians speculated also on the nature of the character, on the intention of the minister and the subject, and on the manner of the Divine institution of the Sacraments. But most worthy of notice was the application to the sacramental rite, of Aristotle's theory of Hylemorphism. In brief, the theologians of the 12th. and 13th. centuries gathered together and syn-

thesized all the traditional data relative to the Sacraments and constructed therefrom a complete theological system.

Unhappily, these were mostly *a priori* speculations. The Hylemorphic theory in particular led theologians to excessive conclusions on the unchangeable character of matter and form, and hence on the manner of the Divine institution. It was the work of the theologians of the fourth period to reduce these conclusions to more circumspect and less sweeping formulas. The vast historical researches occasioned by the Protestant controversies of the 17th. and 18th. centuries demonstrated not only that Christ had not fixed the matter and form of all the Sacraments, but also that some matters and forms had really varied in the course of centuries. These historical facts obliged theologians to attribute to the action of Christ, in the institution of some of the Sacraments, only the determination of their spiritual effects. Thus came into existence the theory of the immediate institution *in genere*. But with the work of Newman showing that development has taken place in all Christian doctrine, explanation of the Divine institution is to-day rightly sought in that idea of development.

This check which the more profound and more critical study of history has given in later years to the speculations of the Middle Ages, shows how unfounded some of these were. Indeed the Church represented by the Council of Trent is far from having consecrated the sacramentary theology of the 13th. century. She defined the traditional doctrine which Protestants were casting aside, but never gave sanction to the systems of theologians. These have to be revised

in the light of history. To this work barely begun are modern theologians devoting their efforts.

It is easy enough to deduce from the exposition of the facts the law of the development of the sacramental doctrines. The method of development particular to sacramentary theology has been to extract from the sacramental practice of the Church those dogmatic explanations which were therein implied. Practice prepared the way for doctrine and has always been the guide of Christian thought.

The Church living by her Sacraments according to her needs, determined the sacramental usages by her practice and agreeably to Christ's intentions. To the sacred rites was joined traditional teaching explaining their meaning and efficacy. It is from this practice of the Church and the teaching which went along with it, that sacramentary theology has grown. All the speculations that were made about the Sacraments, as we have more than once seen, were built upon them as their only legitimate foundation. The doctrine of the matter and form in the sacramental rite, the dogmas of the character, the sevenfold number, and the intention of the minister, were deduced from the sacramental life of the Church, even as the conclusion is deduced from its containing premises.

The doctrine of the efficacy exercised a preponderating influence in this passing from the implicit to the explicit state. The other sacramental dogmas, even in a measure that of the Divine institution, were developed on lines parallel and subordinated to that of efficacy. They are as it were the branches of a great tree, of which the doctrine of the efficacy would

be the hardy trunk; or again as rays of light whose brilliancy becomes more intense as the flame whence they emanate grows in strength. This is readily understood: the efficacy *ex opere operato* being the exclusive characteristic of the Christian Sacraments, in fact their very essence, the progressive knowledge about that efficacy was sure to manifest successively the various aspects of sacramental realities. The beautiful doctrines, for example, of the production in certain cases of the *gratia prima* by the Sacraments of the living, of the amount of the grace produced, of the reviviscence,— are not all these but conclusions deduced from the efficacy of the Sacraments, as it became more and more understood?

If, as the exposition of facts proves, the dogmas of Sacramentary Theology are the expression of the Church's practice, a first consequence which forces itself upon us, is that there is no opposition between history and dogma. Such opposition would exist only in so far as dogma would be in disagreement with the sacramental life of the Church. Except for some minor points, such as the reordinations of the Middle Ages, the historian is obliged to acknowledge that between the definitions of the Council of Trent and the use the Church made of the Sacraments from the beginning down to our own day, there is a substantial conformity, of a nature to satisfy any reasonable mind. To be sure, the manner of administering the Sacraments has varied, but these variations never affected the essence of things. The essential signification of the sacramental rites and the use made of them underwent no change. Disagreement exists in reality only between certain theological theories on the composi-

tion of the sacramental rites and the history of the Sacraments. But the Church never made such theories dogmas of faith. That there were sometimes conflicts between theology and history is not to be wondered at, but theology is quite distinct from dogma.

A further conclusion growing out of our study is this: that the sacramental doctrines are not, as Protestants would have them, merely human doctrines, purely artificial theories hatched out in the brain of St. Augustine and of the Scholastics. A doctrine which is the real explanation of a religious and Divine fact is not a purely human doctrine, but a doctrine implicitly contained in that fact and consequently Divine. Hence it is that ecclesiastical writers like St. Augustine and Peter Lombard, who made the dogma explicit, always connected the dogma with the traditional practices of the Church.

Some Protestants, it is true, do not admit the legitimacy of a development in Christianity: all that is foreign to the letter of the Gospel would be to their mind foreign also to the mind of Christ. But is it not a strangely false conception of the work of Jesus, thus to exclude all development? If the work of Jesus did not progress it would not live, for whatever really lives develops. Catholicity, the living, developing Christianity, is by this very fact the true religion of Jesus, whereas Protestantism is a dead, lifeless Christianity, which has withdrawn itself from the vivifying influences of Christ, who continues to act in the world through His Church. Hence the best apology of the Catholic dogma is in fact the very history of its development.

Lastly — and this is also a consequence flowing

from our historical sketch — it is in the Church alone that a just idea of the Savior's work can be had. It is in the Church and by the Church alone that we can acquire an exact knowledge of Jesus; it is also in and by the Church alone that we can understand His institutions, especially the Sacraments. For to pretend to understand Jesus and His work, while at the same time abstracting from the traditional development which took its start in the Gospel itself, is to take the part for the whole, to vivisect Christianity. Let us then with all our heart cleave to the Church. For according to the thought of St. Augustine, the Church is Jesus Christ continuing to teach the world and to sanctify each of us by His Sacraments.

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